



November 18, 2024

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Cole, Chair Murray, Ranking Member DeLauro and Vice Chair Collins:

As Congress takes steps to consider funding for fiscal year (FY) 2025, the undersigned members of the Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition (HPNEC) urge you to work in a bipartisan manner to provide the highest possible funding for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs for FY 2025. Additionally, we ask you to complete the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) spending bill in December.

HPNEC is an alliance of national organizations representing schools, programs, health professionals, and students dedicated to training our nation's health care workforce to meet the needs of our population. Together, the members of HPNEC advocate for continued support for the health professions and nursing workforce development programs authorized under Titles VII and VIII of the Public Health Service Act and administered by HRSA.

The HRSA Title VII and Title VIII programs have proven successful in recruiting, training, and supporting mental health providers, nurses, public health practitioners, geriatricians, and other front-line health care workers critical to addressing the nation's health needs. In addition, many of these programs encourage participants from diverse, economically disadvantaged, and rural backgrounds to pursue health careers. Establishing a health workforce with providers from these backgrounds and expanding training opportunities in such underserved settings, as the HRSA programs do, improves patients' access to care and enhances health professions learning environments. HPNEC members remain concerned, however, that chronic underfunding for the HRSA Title VII and Title VIII programs will worsen health workforce shortages and hinder our nation's ability to educate current and future providers. Moreover, any additional delays in funding further the budget uncertainty for these important and impactful HRSA programs.

Ensuring that our health workforce is equipped to serve the nation's ever-growing needs and is prepared for the health care demands of tomorrow is an urgent, key national priority.

Support Increased Investments for the HRSA Title VII and VIII Programs

Specifically, we urge you to provide no less than the Senate Appropriations Committee-approved level of \$892.8 million for Title VII and Title VIII programs overall. We are pleased that the Senate's FY 2025 Labor-HHS bill increases an investment in the Title VII geriatrics programs, as well as the Title VIII Nurse Education, Practice, and Retention program. Further, the House's FY 2025 Labor-HHS bill increases the investment in the Oral Health Training and Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training programs. These programs work to enhance interdisciplinary care and community-based linkages, support a robust and diverse nursing workforce, and sustain our oral health workforce.

Reject Cuts to the Title VII and VIII Diversity Pathway and Medical Student Education Programs

While we appreciate the Senate and House's proposed increases, we are particularly concerned with House FY 2025 Labor-HHS bill's elimination of funding for Title VII Centers of Excellence and the Health Careers Opportunity Program, as well as the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Diversity Program. Studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of such pathway programs in strengthening students' academic records, improving test scores, and helping disadvantaged students pursue careers in the health professions. Eliminating these programs would hamper efforts to connect students from rural, underrepresented, and disadvantaged backgrounds to health careers.

Further, we are concerned with the Senate FY 2025 Labor-HHS bill's cuts to the HRSA Title VII Medical Student Education (MSE) program. Last year, the MSE program supported nearly 3,680 students and a total of 806 medical students graduated. Of these graduates, 45 percent went to primary care residencies and 44 percent matched to residencies where they trained in Health Professional Shortage Areas. Increased investment in these programs is essential to helping address health workforce shortages in critical areas of need and shape the future health workforce at all stages of the continuum.

Congress must ensure a robust investment in the Title VII and Title VIII programs to address health workforce shortages and to prepare the health workforce for the health care demands of tomorrow. To that end, **HPNEC urges you to provide the highest possible funding for HRSA Title VII and Title VIII programs.**

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Andrea Price-Carter, HPNEC Executive Director, at apricecarter@aamc.org, or Emily Prest, HPNEC Coalition Manager, at eprest@aamc.org.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine
American Academy of Neurology
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACCP)
American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine
American Association of Nurse Practitioners
American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists (AAPP)
American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologist
American College of Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Dental Association
American Dental Education Association
American Geriatrics Society
American Pediatric Society
American Psychological Association
American Public Health Association
American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science
Association of Academic Chairs of Emergency Medicine
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of Chairs of Departments of Physiology
Association of Chiropractic Colleges
Association of Clinicians for the Underserved (ACU)
Association of Departments of Family Medicine
Association of Family Residency Directors
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
Association of Schools Advancing Health Professions
Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry
Children's Hospital Association
Eldercare Workforce Alliance
Heart Failure Society of America
Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association (HOPA)
National AHEC Organization
National Association of Hispanic Nurses
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Council for Diversity in Health Professions
National Hispanic Health Foundation
National League for Nursing

National Medical Fellowships
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties
North American Primary Care Research Group
Oncology Nursing Society
PA Education Association
Pediatric Policy Council
Pre-Health Dreamers
Society for Academic Emergency Medicine
Society for Pediatric Research
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine
South Asian Public Health Association

cc: The Honorable Robert Aderholt
The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito