



April 26, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chair  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education, and Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education, and Related Agencies  
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chair  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education, and Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor, Health and Human Services  
Education, and Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairs DeLauro and Murray, and Ranking Members Cole and Blunt:

The more than 80 undersigned members of Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition (HPNEC) **urge Congress to provide \$1.51 billion for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs for FY 2023.** HPNEC is an alliance of national organizations representing schools, students, health professionals, and communities dedicated to ensuring that the health care workforce is educated and trained to meet the needs of all patients.

We appreciate that Congress has allocated modest increases for a handful of Title VII and Title VIII programs in recent years; however, most programs, including certain health diversity workforce programs, have been stagnant. The coalition's proposed increase will help HRSA address health inequities and patients' evolving needs across America, especially as the current and future health care workforce remains on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The HRSA Title VII and Title VIII programs have helped the country combat COVID-19, despite the new challenges the pandemic posed for grantees. Many grantees pivoted their curriculum to educate our health workforce during this public health challenge. There were unexpected costs to provide personal protective equipment (PPE) for in-person clinical training or switching to a virtual learning experience. Simultaneously, the pandemic has underscored the need to increase and continuously reshape our health workforce. The programs have proven successful in recruiting, training, and supporting public health practitioners, nurses, geriatricians,

mental health providers, and other frontline health care workers critical to addressing COVID-19. Additionally, HRSA has tasked grantees with utilizing innovative models of care, such as training providers in telehealth, to improve patients' access to care during the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also pulled back the curtain on pervasive health inequities facing minority communities, as well as gaps in care for our most vulnerable patients, including an aging population that requires more health care services. The U.S Census Bureau projects that by 2045: our population will grow by over 18%, more than half the country will come from a racial or ethnic minority group, and one in five Americans will be over the age of 65.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, HRSA estimates that 136 million Americans already live in federally-designated Health Professions Shortage Areas.<sup>2</sup> The Title VII and Title VIII programs educate current and future providers to serve these ever-growing needs, while preparing for the health care demands of tomorrow. A diverse health care workforce improves access to care, patient satisfaction, and the learning environment. Studies show that Title VII and Title VIII programs lead to increasing the number of underrepresented students enrolling in health professions schools, heightening awareness of factors contributing to health disparities, and attracting health professionals more likely to treat underrepresented patients.<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, the HRSA health professions and nursing workforce programs are structured to advance new delivery systems and models of care — for example, promoting interprofessional teams and integrating mental health services with primary care. Whether developing new curriculum to address emerging public health crises, such as substance use disorders, or collaborating with community leaders in educating providers to deliver culturally competent care, the Title VII and Title VIII programs help ensure our health workforce is at the forefront of meeting all patients' health needs.

Title VII and Title VIII programs include:

- **Public Health Workforce Development** programs train America's public health workforce to identify underlying causes of health issues, new disease strains, health disparities, and other public health issues vital to the country's response to any pandemic.
- **Health Careers Opportunity Program, Centers of Excellence, Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students, and Faculty Loan Repayments** programs support the training and mentorship of future health professionals from underrepresented backgrounds.
- **Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development** programs provide federal support to address all aspects of nursing workforce demands, including education, practice, recruitment, and retention, with a focus on the health care needs of rural and underserved communities.

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2018/cb18-41-population-projections.html>

<sup>2</sup><http://data.hrsa.gov/Default/GenerateHPSAQuarterlyReport>

<sup>3</sup><https://reader.elsevier.com/reader/sd/pii/S0027968419300653?token=7DFCE7AE5AD4BD333361FBC8DFBACC8F1C74D3AB288F4E39AC209D4701E97C41AC8CB4DBBE8F0707116491A17F6C4E7F>

- **Primary Care Medicine, Medical Student Education, Pediatric Subspecialty Loan Repayment, and Oral Health Training** programs improve health care access and quality in underserved areas by training general internists, family medicine practitioners, general pediatricians, pediatric subspecialists, oral health providers, and physician assistants.
- **Area Health Education Centers, Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Programs, and Geriatrics Academic Career Awards**, which support interdisciplinary, community-based training programs for health care professionals, provide support for health care delivery in rural and urban underserved areas.
- **Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training Program, Mental and Substance Use Disorders Workforce Training Demonstration Program, and the Graduate Psychology Education Program**, strengthens our nation's demand for mental health and substance use support, which is expected to increase dramatically due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Health Professions Workforce Information and Analysis**, which advises future decision making on America's health workforce during times of crisis

With our nation needing to increase investment in our health workforce, HPNEC urges Congress to provide \$1.51 billion for the HRSA Title VII and Title VIII programs in FY 2023.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association  
 Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine  
 American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry  
 American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology  
 American Academy of Family Physicians  
 American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine  
 American Academy of PAs  
 American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry  
 American Academy of Pediatrics  
 American Association for Dental Research  
 American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
 American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine  
 American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy  
 American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine  
 American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training  
 American Association of Nurse Practitioners  
 American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges  
 American College of Cardiology  
 American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
 American College of Osteopathic Internists  
 American College of Physicians

American College of Preventive Medicine  
American Dental Association  
American Dental Education Association  
American Federation of Teachers  
American Geriatrics Society  
American Medical Student Association  
American Music Therapy Association  
American Nephrology Nurses Association  
American Occupational Therapy Association  
American Pediatric Society  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science  
American Society for Reproductive Medicine  
American Surgical Association  
America's Essential Hospitals  
Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries  
Association of American Indian Physicians  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of Chairs of Departments of Physiology  
Association of Chiropractic Colleges.  
Association of Departments of Family Medicine  
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors  
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs  
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities  
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses  
Association of Schools Advancing Health Professions  
Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry  
Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology  
College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists  
Council of Graduate Schools  
Council on Social Work Education  
Eldercare Workforce Alliance  
Health Professions Network  
Heart Failure Society of America  
Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association  
National AHEC Organization  
National Association for Geriatric Education  
National Association of Geriatric Education Centers  
National Association of Hispanic Nurses  
National Association of Nurse Practitioner's in Women's Health

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Athletic Trainers' Association  
National Council for Diversity in Health Professions  
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National League for Nursing  
National Medical Association  
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties  
North American Primary Care Research Group  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Pediatric Policy Council  
Physician Assistant Education Association  
Pre-Health Dreamers  
Society for Pediatric Research Society of Behavioral Medicine  
Society of General Internal Medicine  
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine  
Student National Medical Association