March 22, 2012

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS and Education
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS and Education
156 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Denny Rehberg
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS and Education
2358B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS and Education
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Harkin and Rehberg and Ranking Member Shelby and DeLauro:

The undersigned members of the Friends of HRSA coalition urge you to provide at least $7.0 billion for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in the FY 2013 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill.

While we recognize the reality of the current fiscal climate, our request of $7.0 billion represents the minimum amount necessary for HRSA to continue to meet the health care needs of the American public. Over the past several years, HRSA has received significant reductions in funding, undermining the ability of its successful programs to grow. Our requested minimum level of funding will allow the agency to carry out critical public health programs and services that reach millions of Americans, including training for public health and health care professionals, providing primary care services through community health centers, improving access to care for rural communities, supporting maternal and child health care programs, providing health care to people living with HIV/AIDS, and many more. However, much more is needed for the agency to achieve its ultimate mission of ensuring access to culturally competent, quality health services; eliminating health disparities; and rebuilding the public health and health care infrastructure.

The Friends of HRSA coalition is a non-profit and non-partisan alliance of national organizations, collectively representing millions of public health and health care professionals, academicians and consumers. The coalition’s principal goal is to ensure that HRSA’s broad health programs receive the support necessary to reach the populations presently underserved by the nation’s patchwork of health services.

HRSA operates programs in every state and thousands of communities across the country and is a national leader in providing health services for individuals and families. The agency serves as a health safety net for the medically underserved, including the nearly 50 million Americans who were
uninsured in 2010 and 50 million Americans who live in neighborhoods where primary health care services are scarce.

Greater investment is necessary to sufficiently fund HRSA services and programs that continue to face increasing demands. We urge you to consider HRSA’s role in building the foundation for health service delivery and ensuring that vulnerable populations receive quality health services, while continuing to strengthen our nation’s health safety net programs. By supporting, planning for and adapting to change within our health care system, we can build on the successes of the past and address new gaps that may emerge in the future.

We are grateful for your support in the past and urge you to support a funding level of $7.0 billion for HRSA in FY 2013.

Sincerely,

AcademyHealth
AIDS Project Los Angeles
AIDS United
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of Poison Control Centers
American College of Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Dental Hygienists' Association
American Geriatrics Society
American Hospital Association
American Medical Student Association
American Medical Women's Association
American Organization of Nurse Executives
American Physical Therapy Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychological Association
American Public Health Association
Arthritis Foundation
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research
Association of Academic Health Centers
Association of Accredited Public Health Programs
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of Clinicians for the Underserved
Association of Departments of Family Medicine
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors
Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools
Association of Public Health Laboratories
Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science
Children's Home Society of America
Coalition for Health Funding
Council on Social Work Education
Emergency Nurses Association
Family Voices
HIV Medicine Association
International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC)
March of Dimes
Meharry Medical College
Morehouse School of Medicine
National AHEC Organization
National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors
National Assembly on School-Based Health Care
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems
National Association of Social Workers
National Coalition of STD Directors
National Council for Diversity in the Health Professions
National Disability Rights Network
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National League for Nursing
North American Primary Care Research Group
Oncology Nursing Society
Ryan White Medical Providers Coalition
Society for Public Health Education
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine
The AIDS Institute
Tuskegee University College of Veterinary Medicine, Nursing, and Allied Health

Cc: Senate Appropriations Committee
   House Appropriations Committee