

July 24, 2009

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Harkin and Cochran:

As you begin your consideration of the FY 2010 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations, the undersigned members of the ANSR (Americans for Nursing Shortage Relief) Alliance urge you to support the President's overall budget proposal of **\$263.4 million for the *Title VIII – Nursing Workforce Development Programs of the Public Health Service Act*. The Alliance also requests funding of the Advanced Education Nursing program (Sec. 811) at an increased level on par with the other Title VIII programs.**

The Title VIII programs, administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), provide the main federal funding for nursing education, practice, and retention, aimed at maintaining an adequate supply of nurses to attain the nation's goal of ensuring access to affordable, high-quality health care, particularly for the country's vulnerable populations. However, today's shortage of appropriately prepared nurses – although eased somewhat in various locales during today's recession – is outpacing the current level of federal investments in Title VIII programs.

In March 2009, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported continued growth in the health care sector, despite the nation's economic downturn with unemployment reaching 8.1% in February 2009. With that month's job-loss of 681,000 realized in nearly all major industries, BLS also reported the addition of 27,000 new jobs, mostly filled by nurses, at hospitals, long-term care facilities, and other ambulatory care settings. Absent sufficient support to remedy the shortfall, the workforce deficit also will continue to aggravate nurse faculty scarcities throughout the education infrastructure, preventing too few eligible people from entering the profession at the rate the nation requires to meet our mounting health care needs.

The link between health care and our nation's economic security and global competitiveness is undeniable. Having a sufficient nursing workforce to meet the demands of a highly diverse and aging population is an essential component to reforming the health care system as well as improving the health status of the nation and reducing health care costs.

The Alliance represents a diverse cross-section of health care and other related organizations, health care providers, and supporters of nursing issues that have united to address the national nursing shortage. We stand ready to work with the 111th Congress to advance programs and policies that

will ensure that our nation has a sufficient and adequately prepared nursing workforce to provide quality care to all well into the 21st century.

Sincerely yours,

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses	National Association of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing	National Association of Nurse Massage Therapists
American Academy of Nurse Practitioners	National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
American Academy of Nursing	National Association of Orthopaedic Nurses
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses	National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists	National Association of Registered Nurse First Assistants
American Association of Nurse Assessment Coordinators	National Black Nurses Association
American Association of Nurse Executives	National Council of State Boards of Nursing
American Association of Occupational Health Nurses	National Council of Women's Organizations
American College of Nurse Practitioners	National Gerontological Nursing Association
American Organization of Nurse Executives	National League for Nursing
American Psychiatric Nurses Association	National Nursing Centers Consortium
American Society for Pain Management Nursing	National Nursing Staff Development Organization
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses	National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing
American Society of Plastic Surgical Nurses	National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties
Association for Radiologic & Imaging Nursing	National Student Nurses' Association, Inc.
Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses	Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses	Oncology Nursing Society
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses	Pediatric Endocrinology Nursing Society
Association of State and Territorial Directors of Nursing	RN First Assistants Policy & Advocacy Coalition
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric & Neonatal Nurses	Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates, Inc.
Developmental Disabilities Nurses Association	Society of Pediatric Nurses
Emergency Nurses Association	Society of Trauma Nurses
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association	Women's Research & Education Institute
Infusion Nurses Society	Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society
International Society of Nurses in Genetics, Inc.	
Legislative Coalition of Virginia Nurses	
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists	
National Association of Neonatal Nurses	