

January 29, 2024

The Honorable Patty Murray Chair Appropriations Committee United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger Chair Appropriations Committee United States House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515 The Honorable Susan Collins Vice Chair Appropriations Committee United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro Ranking Member Appropriations Committee United States House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515

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

As Congress takes steps to consider funding for fiscal year (FY) 2024, the members of 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 fiscal year (FY) 2024.

HPNEC is an alliance of more than 90 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.

HPNEC members appreciate that the newly announced tiered FY 2024 CR deal into March that would allow the annual spending bills to proceed. However, we remain concerned that current funding levels for the chronically underfunded HRSA Title VII and Title VIII programs will worsen health workforce shortages and hinder our nation's ability to educate current and future providers. Ensuring that our health workforce is equipped to serve the nation's evergrowing needs and is prepared for the health care demands of tomorrow is an urgent, key national priority.

At a minimum, HPNEC members urge you to start with the \$877.8 million funding level proposed in the Senate's FY 24 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related

**Agencies** (**LHHS**) appropriations bill. Furthermore, we urge Congress to finalize the FY 2024 spending packages as soon as possible and avoid problematic policy provisions that would impose arbitrary restrictions on efforts to fortify a strong public health workforce.

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 target participants from diverse, economically disadvantaged, and rural backgrounds. Establishing a health workforce with providers from these backgrounds improves patients' access to care and satisfaction and enhances health professions learning environments.

We are pleased that the Senate's FY 24 LHHS bill increases investment in the Title VII geriatrics and Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training programs and in the Title VIII Nurse Education, Practice, and Retention and Nursing Faculty Loan Repayment programs. We also appreciate the bill's continued funding for the Title VII and VIII diversity pathway programs. 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. In contrast, the House FY 24 LHHS spending bill would eliminate funding for Title VII Centers of Excellence, the Health Careers Opportunity Program, and the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Diversity Program, and includes other damaging policy riders that would hamper efforts to connect students from rural, underrepresented, and disadvantaged backgrounds to health careers.

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 Katherine Cruz, Legislative Analyst with AAMC, at <a href="mailto:kcruz@aamc.org">kcruz@aamc.org</a>, or Andrea Price-Carter, Director of Health Equity Advocacy and Government Relations with AAMC, at <a href="mailto:apricecarter@aamc.org">apricecarter@aamc.org</a>.

## Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association
Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses
Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine (AAIM)
AMDA - The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine
American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry
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 PAs

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

American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine

American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training

American Association of Naturopathic Physicians

American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)

American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists (AAPP)

American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges

American College of Academic Addiction Medicine (ACAAM)

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

American College of Osteopathic Internists

American College of Physicians

American College of Preventive Medicine

American College of Rheumatology

American Council of Academic Physical Therapy

American Dental Association

American Dental Education Association

American Geriatrics Society

American Medical Student Association

American Nephrology Nurses Association

American Occupational Therapy Association

American Osteopathic Association

American Pediatric Society

American Physical Therapy Association

American Psychiatric Association

American Psychological Association

American Public Health Association

American Society For Clinical Laboratory Science

American Society for Clinical Pathology

Association of Academic Chairs of Emergency Medicine

Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries

Association of Accredited Naturopathic Medical Colleges

Association of American Indian Physicians

Association of American Medical Colleges

Association of Bioethics Program Directors

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 Maternal & Child Health Programs

Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs

Association of Minority Health Professions Schools (AMHPS)

**Association of Pathology Chairs** 

Association of Rehabilitation Nurses

Association of Schools Advancing Health Professions

Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry

Association of the Clinicians for the Underserved (ACU)

Association of University Programs in Health Administration

Children's Hospital Association

Council on Social Work Education

Eldercare Workforce Alliance

Heart Failure Society of America

Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association (HOPA)

Medical Organization for Latino Advancement

National AHEC Organization (NAO)

National Association for Geriatric Education

National Association of Hispanic Nurses

National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Council for Diversity in Health Professions (NCDHP)

National Hispanic Medical Association

National League for Nursing

National Medical Association

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** 

Rheumatology Nurses Society

Social Mission Alliance

Society for Academic Emergency Medicine

Society for Pediatric Research

Society of General Internal Medicine

Society of Teachers of Family Medicine

Society of University Surgeons

South Asian Public Health Association

Student National Medical Association

CC: Congressional Leadership