

November 26, 2019

The Honorable Richard Shelby Chair Appropriations Committee United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey Chair Appropriations Committee United States House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515 The Honorable Patrick Leahy Vice Chair Appropriations Committee United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger Ranking Member Appropriations Committee United States House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Shelby, Chair Lowey, Vice Chair Leahy, and Ranking Member Granger:

The 60 undersigned members of the Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition (HPNEC) write to restate the coalition's recommendation of \$690 million for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs for fiscal year (FY) 2020. While the Senate proposed \$633.5 million for current Title VII and Title VIII in FY 2020, we are encouraged by the \$680 million allocated for the programs that passed by the House of Representatives earlier this summer.

HPNEC is an alliance of national organizations representing schools, programs, health professionals, and students dedicated to ensuring the health care workforce is trained to meet the needs of our population. The Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs are structured to allow grantees to test educational innovations, respond to changing delivery systems and models of care, and address timely health threats in their communities.

With the passage of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019 (<u>Public Law 116-37</u>) Congress has the ability to increase investment in our nation's health workforce. HPNEC encourages Congress to work in a bipartisan, bicameral manner to pass legislation that helps vulnerable patients by prioritizing the supply, distribution, and diversity of our nation's health care workforce.

While we appreciate proposed increases to the Area Health Education Centers and nursing workforce programs, we are deeply disappointed to see the proposed elimination of \$14.2 million for the **Health Career Opportunity Program (HCOP)** in the Senate Labor-HHS-Education spending bill. The Title VII HCOP pipeline program helps ensure a culturally competent workforce to meet the needs of our growing population. National HCOP academies encourage more than 10,000 students from diverse backgrounds including underrepresented minorities, rural, veterans, and other economically disadvantaged students annually to pursue a career in the health professions. We appreciate that **the House bill provided \$20 million for the HCOP programs in FY 2020.** 

As we face nationwide health professional shortages, it is crucial that we continue to enhance the federal commitment to the programs that help the next generation of providers stay ahead of the increasing health care challenges of our country. The scholarships, loan repayment programs, grants and contracts provided to academic institutions, students, and non-profit organizations through Title VII and VIII programs are essential in attempting to fill the gaps in the supply of health professionals not met by traditional market forces.

While HPNEC recognizes the difficulty you face in a constrained budget environment, we continue to urge you to provide \$690 million or at least the House levels for the current programs under Titles VII and VIII in FY 2020 to help ensure the U.S. health workforce is equipped to address the nation's health care challenges.

For any questions regarding our request, please contact Brett Roude at <u>broude@aamc.org</u> or 202-753-5726.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association American Academy of Family Physicians 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 Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training American Association of Nurse Practitioners American College of Osteopathic Internists American College of Physicians American College of Preventive Medicine American Dental Association American Dental Education Association American Geriatrics Society American Medical Student Association American Nurses Association American Occupational Therapy Association American Pediatric Society American Psychological Association American Public Health Association American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science American Society for Clinical Pathology Association of American Medical Colleges Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges 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 Women's Health, Obstetric & Neonatal Nurses College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists Council of Graduate Schools Council on Social Work Education Eldercare Workforce Alliance Hematology/Oncology Pharmacist Association International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium National AHEC Organization National Association for Geriatric Education National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners National Athletic Trainers' Association National Council for Diversity in the 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 Society for Pediatric Research Society of General Internal Medicine Society of Teachers of Family Medicine Student National Medical Association

cc: Senate Appropriations Committee House Appropriations Committee