



November 20, 2020

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
United States Senate
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
United States Senate
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
United States House of Representative
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
United States House of Representative
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shelby, Chairwoman Lowey, Vice Chairman Leahy, and Ranking Member Granger:

As the nation continues to combat COVID-19 and prepare for future healthcare challenges, federal funding for nursing education and research remains essential. As you continue your important work to finalize and pass FY2021 appropriations legislation, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) respectfully requests your continued support for the current and future nursing workforce through providing:

- **At least \$269.972 million for Nursing Workforce Development programs** (Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 296 et seq.]) as recommended by the U.S. House Committee on Appropriations and approved by the U.S. House of Representatives for FY 2021¹; and
- **At least \$177.976 million for the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR, National Institutes of Health)** from within the overall NIH funding level as recommended by the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations for FY 2021.²

Additionally, given the extraordinary challenges highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic, AACN strongly urges the Committee to include **additional supplemental funds** for these crucial programs to meet the demands of the current public health challenge.

AACN represents more than 840 schools of nursing that educate more than 560,000 students and employ more than 50,000 faculty. Collectively, these institutions graduate our nation's Registered Nurses (RN), Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), faculty, and researchers. Our members

¹ FY 2021 Department of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act. U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations. Retrieved from: <https://appropriations.house.gov/sites/democrats.appropriations.house.gov/files/LHHS%20Report%20-%20GPO%20-%207.8.20.pdf>

² FY 2021 Explanatory Statement for Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 2021. Retrieved from: <https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/LHHSRept.pdf>

are committed to preparing a highly educated nursing workforce and strengthening the foundation of nursing science.

As we have seen, nurse educators, nursing students, and nurses are our frontline heroes, providing care to patients across the country, including those in rural and underserved areas. Now, more than ever, we must invest in nursing education, research, and the workforce to ensure the nursing pathway remains strong and ready to address current and future healthcare emergencies.

The Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs have consistently and continually built the supply and distribution of highly educated nurses by strengthening nursing education at all levels, from entry preparation through graduate study. Through grants, scholarships, and loan repayment programs, these vital federal investments positively impact the profession's ability to serve America's patients in all communities, especially those most in need, while also bolstering diversity within the workforce and increasing the number of nurses available to provide essential lifesaving services.

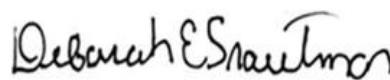
In addition, NINR, as one of the 27 Institutes and Centers at NIH, continues to develop knowledge to build the scientific foundation for clinical practice to improve healthcare delivery across the entire lifespan. In fact, 80% of research-focused educational training grants at schools of nursing are funded in part by NINR.³ Through these grants and others, nurse scientists, often working collaboratively with other health professionals, are generating and translating new findings in areas such as big data, data science, and precision health.⁴

Supporting the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs and NINR is essential to sustaining a strong nursing workforce able to keep America healthy and meet healthcare needs, especially during this and future public health challenges. AACN appreciates your consideration of our requests of **at least \$269.972 million for Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs and \$177.976 million for NINR**, as well as the need for **supplemental funds** for these programs during the COVID-19 pandemic. If AACN can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact AACN's Director of Government Affairs, Rachel Stevenson, at (202) 463-6930, ext. 271 or rstevenson@aacnnursing.org.

Sincerely,



Susan Bakewell-Sachs, PhD, RN, FAAN
Board Chair



Deborah E. Trautman, PhD, RN, FAAN
President and Chief Executive Officer

CC:
Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi

³ Journal of Professional Nursing (2019) National Institute of Health (NIH) funding patterns in Schools of Nursing: Who is funding nursing science research and who is conducting research at Schools of Nursing?
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755722319301164?via=ihub#>

⁴ National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Nursing Research. *The NINR Strategic Plan: Advancing Science, Improving Lives*. Retrieved from https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/www.ninr.nih.gov/files/NINR_StratPlan2016_reduced.pdf.

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell

Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer

Chairman Roy Blunt, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies

Ranking Member, Patty Murray, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies

Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies

Ranking Member, Tom Cole, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies