

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 13, 2018

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

We respectfully request that the Nursing Workforce Development Programs (Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act, administered by HRSA) receive \$266 million in Fiscal Year 2019 through the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill. An investment in our nursing workforce today is a commitment to America's health care now and into the future. We request that all of the Title VIII programs are funded, which include:

- Advanced Nursing Education Program
- Advanced Education Nursing Traineeships and Nurse Anesthetist Traineeships
- Nursing Workforce Diversity
- Nurse Education, Practice, Quality, and Retention Program
- Nurse Faculty Loan Program
- NURSE Corps Loan Repayment and Scholarship Program
- Comprehensive Geriatric Education Program

More than ever, it is essential that communities across the nation have access to safe, high-quality nursing care. For over five decades, the Title VIII programs have been directly tied to this endeavor. The programs bolster nursing education at all levels, from entry-level preparation through graduate study, and also support academic institutions and the nurse faculty who prepare today's nursing students to be tomorrow's expert clinicians.

Collectively, the programs supported over 61,000 students in academic year 2015-2016 alone and assisted in bridging patients with nursing care across a variety of settings, including community health centers, hospitals, and schools of nursing, to name a few.

For example, in Academic Year 2015-2016, the Title VIII Advanced Education Nursing Traineeships (AENT) and Nurse Anesthetist Traineeships (NAT) supported 3,034 students. Eighty percent of AENT recipients were trained in primary care settings, and 70 percent of NAT recipients were trained in medically-underserved areas. Additionally, 55 percent of Title VIII Loan Repayment Program participants working in an underserved area as a condition of loan repayment voluntarily extended their service contracts to continue providing care to these vulnerable populations.

Title VIII programs also aim to promote a diverse nursing workforce to reflect an increasingly diverse patient population. In 2015-2016, the Nursing Workforce Diversity program supported 7,337 nursing students and aspiring students to promote the recruitment of individuals from racial and ethnic minorities underrepresented in registered nursing.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration of our request and understand the difficult decisions your Subcommittee will face in this fiscal climate. However, support for each of the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs is a direct investment in the nursing workforce, our nation's well-being, and the sustainability of our health care system as a whole.

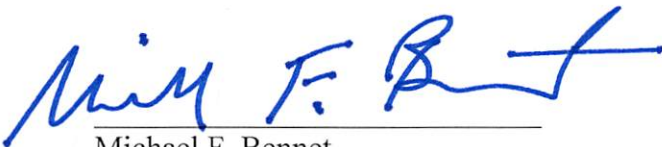
Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senate



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senate



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senate



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senate



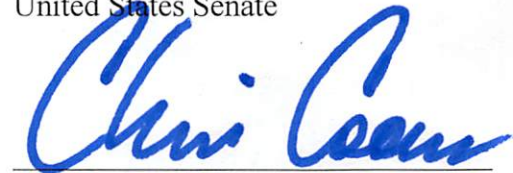
Cory A. Booker
United States Senate



Sherrod Brown
United States Senate



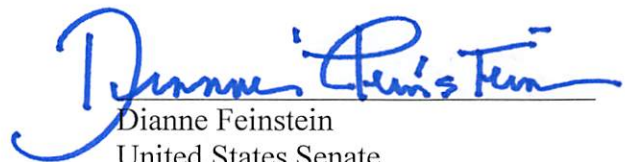
Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senate



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senate



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senate



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate



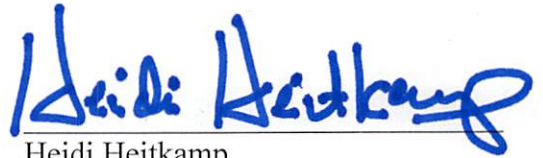
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senate



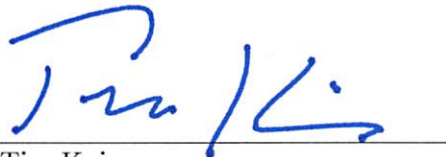
Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senate



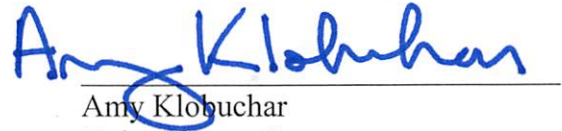
Martin Heinrich
United States Senate



Heidi Heitkamp
United States Senate



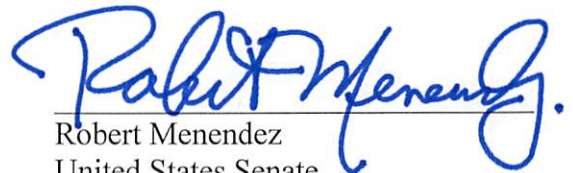
Tim Kaine
United States Senate



Amy Klobuchar
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Edward J. Markey
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Christopher Murphy
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Bill Nelson
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