

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 19, 2005

The Honorable Ralph Regula  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We are writing in support of a \$175 million funding level for nursing workforce development programs in the FY 2006 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. These programs, contained in Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act, are the primary means for supporting a sufficient nursing workforce.

The United States is currently in the midst of a critical nursing shortage. The American College of Healthcare Executives reported in October, 2004 that 72% of hospitals were experiencing a nursing shortage at their facility.

This unprecedented shortage threatens our ability to treat today's patients and undermines homeland security efforts. Recent studies published in the New England Journal of Medicine and the Journal of the American Medical Association have shown that the nursing shortage is contributing to preventable health care complications. The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations has reported that the shortage of nurses contributes to nearly a quarter of all unexpected incidents that kill or injure hospitalized patients.

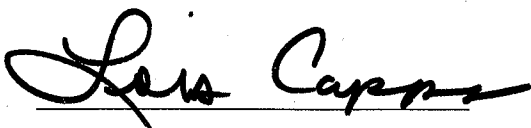
Nurses are also critical to efforts to treat U.S. military personnel and to prepare for and respond to domestic threats. There are currently more than 19,000 RNs providing care through the military reserves. The GAO reports that nursing shortages are complicating efforts at the state and local level to implement terrorism preparedness efforts.

Further evidence of the Nursing shortage is the impact on Military recruitment - for the last two years the Army has been unable to meet its recruiting goals for Nurses in both the Active and Reserve forces. All three services are offering lucrative recruitment packages that include \$15,000 sign on bonuses and loan forgiveness packages that surpass those offered by HRSA.

Disturbingly, the nursing shortage is predicted to get much worse. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) projects that, absent aggressive intervention, the current nursing shortage will increase four fold by 2020. Today's funding for nursing education and recruitment is roughly one-quarter of the appropriations provided in 1974.

Now is the time to reinvest in nursing. Your support for a total of at least \$175 million in FY 2006 funding for nursing workforce development is vital to maintaining and improving the health of our nation.

Sincerely,



Bert Duke

Tom

Benny Frank

Howard F. Bernau

Thomas R. McSherry

Ben Cardin

Donald M. Payne

James Moran

Bill Clark

Erin L. Enge

J. Lind

Cole E. Childs

Robert M.

James E. Gibson

Paul

Paul Hensell

Mike McDermott

Bill Pascrell Jr

James Oberstar

Charles Rangel

Alcee H. Hastings

Bart Stupak

Sandy Levin

Major R. Owens

Donis O. Matsui

Gene Taylor

Bart Gordon

Jerrold Nadler

John M. McHugh

Shelby

Maple Waters

Elizabeth F. Cummings

Vinny

Susan Davis

Clayton

Tommy Baldwin

Betty McCollum

Tom Lantos

Dalene Horley

Art R.

Ben Van Halbe

Tom Bell

Rush Holt

Joe Schabrowsky

Jim M<sup>o</sup> Oemitt

T. Halbe

Maureen Rainey

John Hayden

Frank LoBunde

Pete Stark

Siare E. Watson

Ed Cox

Carolyn McCarthy

John Merre

Paul Hill

Hilda L. Solis

C.A. Dutch Ruppersberg

Grace S. Kaplitz

Eddie Bernice Johnson

Jim Rosten

Neil Abernethy

Bob Chen

Raul M. Grijalva

John Spau

Mike Ross

Jim McLean

Apple Ball

Allyson J. Schwartz

Harold Ford

Mary Bono

Jed Strickland

Stephanie Jensen

Jim Powell

Frank Pallone, Jr.

Michelle Mitchell

Ryminous

Dan Canby

Robert Welch

Sue Isaac

Anna Zhou

Henry a Waxman

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## Signatories to the Nurse Education Funding Letter of May 19, 2005

Abercrombie	McGovern
Allen	McHugh
Baldwin	McIntyre
Berman	McNulty
Bono	Michaud
Brown, Sherrod	Miller, Brad
Capps	Moore
Cardin	Moran (VA)
Cardoza	Nadler
Case	Napolitano
Christensen	Norton
Clyburn	Oberstar
Cummings	Owens
Davis (CA)	Pallone
Dingell	Pascrell
Engel	Payne
Eshoo	Peterson (MN)
Etheridge	Rangel
Ford	Reyes
Frank	Ross
Gordon	Ruppersberger
Grijalva	Sanders
Hastings (FL)	Schakowsky
Hayworth	Schwartz (PA)
Herseth	Shays
Hinchey	Simmons
Holden	Snyder
Holt	Solis
Hooley	Spratt
Israel	Stark
Johnson, EB	Strickland
Kildee	Stupak
Lantos	Taylor (MS)
Leach	Towns
Levin	Van Hollen
LoBiondo	Waters
Lynch	Watson
Marshall	Waxman
Matsui	Wexler
McCarthy, Carolyn	Whitfield
McCullom	Wu
McDermott	