

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 9, 2005

Representative Ralph Regula  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,  
Education and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Representative David Obey  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,  
Education and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Regula and Ranking Member Obey:

As you engage in conference negotiations, we urge you to cede to the Senate funding level of \$156 million for the Title VIII nursing workforce development programs in the final FY2006 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. Title VIII programs provide the primary financial support for nursing workforce development and education.

The United States is currently facing a nursing shortage of critical proportions. This shortage is only expected to worsen as the baby boom generation places an increased strain on the health system. The Bureau of Labor statistics has projected that health care facilities will need to fill more than 1.1 million registered nurse job openings by 2012 to accommodate growing patient needs and to replace retiring nurses. As nurses are required first responders during natural disasters, a key resource for pandemic flu preparations, and a critical component of health care delivery to the U.S. military, this shortage threatens our very strength as a nation.

Current funding levels fail to meet the growing need for nurses. In fiscal year 2004, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) was forced to turn away 82% of the applicants for the Nurse Education Loan Repayment Program (NELRP), and 98% of the applicants for the Nursing Scholarship program due to lack of adequate funding. These much-needed programs are used to direct RNs into areas with the greatest need – including community health centers, disproportionate share hospitals, and departments of public health. In 1974, during the last serious nursing shortage, Congress appropriated \$153 million for nurse education programs. In today's dollars that appropriation would be worth \$609 million, more than 4 times current spending.

These programs represent an important investment for our nation. We urge you to join us in this bipartisan effort to ensure that Title VIII programs have the resources required to meet this burgeoning shortage. We respectfully urge you to cede to the Senate funding level of \$156 million in the final FY2006 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. We greatly appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Mike McIntyre

Art B.

John Brown

Wanda Dindig

Carolyn B. Maloney

John Smith

Margaret A. Owens

Gerold Hadley

Dois O. Matsui

Art Hall

John Lee

John Obuster

Jim Moran

Benny Stark

Felipe E. Cummings

Art Hall

Mark Soder

Harold A. Berman

Henry A. Waxman

Mr. Jefferson

Jim Lusk

Walter Pelt

Pat DeFazio

Barry Byrnes

Ben Cant

William C. McNulty

Clare E. Kildeer

Rich Boucher

David Price

Ernie L. Engel

Eleanor H. Norton

Paul Hargis

Jim McDevitt

Jan Schubring

Betty McAllen

Cheryl Sharp

Ji Matheson

Auss Carahan

Chris Van Hollen

Rail M. Hrijaku

Rush Holt

Tony Baldwin

Tom Allen

Ausan A. Davis

F. J.

Kalun Ewald

Leard L. Esnell

Henry Cullas

Jim Mull  
D. O. O. O.

Brent H. H.

Allyson L. Schwartz

G. H. H. H.

Ed Strickland

Alfred H. H.

Ed Whitford

Michael H. Michael

Albert R. R.

Jim L. L.

Frank P. P.

Jim O. O.

Stephanie T. T.

Mike R. R.

Ed Whitford

John Gruen

Anthony

Eddie Benic Johnson

Miss E. Capra

Grace J. Napoletano

Dennis

Paul 200

John Salazar

Ron Kind

Neil Abernombie

Danny K. Davis

Bob Young

C. A. Dutch Ruppelberger

Hilda L. Solis

Ben Chandler

Bob Felner

Ron Paul

mma Zshoo

Robert Weyl

MA Samuels  
John Smith

Gene Pat

John A. DeBenedo

Pete Stark

Zee Loff

Jim Thurston

Carolyn McCarthy

Jim Langevin

Diane E. Watson

Mark Udall

Gene Taylor

Tom Lantos

Bill Pascrell Jr.

Howard Coble

Rubin Higginson

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**Members signing the Nov. 9<sup>th</sup> letter re: nurse education funding**

Abercrombie	<i>Lobiondo</i>	Spratt
Allen	Lofgren	Stark
Baldwin	Lynch	Strickland
Berman	Maloney	Stupak
Boswell	Marshall	Taylor (MS)
Boucher	Matheson	Udall (CO)
Brown (OH)	Matsui	Van Hollen
Butterfield	McCarthy	Watson
Capps	McCollum	Waxman
Capuano	McDermott	Wexler
Cardin	McGovern	<i>Whitfield</i>
Cardoza	<i>McHugh</i>	Wynn
Carnahan	McIntyre	
Chandler	McNulty	
<i>Coble</i>	Michaud	
Crowley	Miller (NC)	
Cuellar	Moore (KS)	
Cummings	Moran (VA)	
Davis (CA)	Nadler	
Davis (FL)	Napolitano	
Davis (IL)	Norton	
DeFazio	Oberstar	
Dingell	Owens	
Emanuel	Pallone	
Engel	Pascrell	
Eshoo	<i>Paul</i>	
Etheridge	Peterson (MN)	
Frank	Pomeroy	
Grijalva	<i>Porter</i>	
Herseth	Price (NC)	
Higgins	Rahall	
Hinchey	<i>Ramstad</i>	
Hinojosa	Reyes	
Holt	Ross	
Jefferson	Ruppersberger	
<i>Johnson (IL)</i>	Salazar	
Johnson, EB	Sanders	
Kildee	Schakowsky	
Kind	Schwartz	
Langevin	<i>Shays</i>	
Lantos	<i>Simmons</i>	
LaTourette	Smith (WA)	
<i>Leach</i>	Solis	
Levin	<i>Souder</i>	