

 American Association
of Colleges of Nursing

April 16, 2009

The Honorable Bill Pascrell, Jr.
2464 Rayburn House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Pascrell:

On behalf of the over 640 member institutions of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), I would like to write in support of H.R. 1946, the Health Workforce Investment Act of 2009. As the national voice for baccalaureate and graduate nursing education representing over 270,000 students and 13,000 faculty, AACN commends your efforts to address the shortage of healthcare professionals in our country.

Of particular interest to our members, the programs in H.R. 1946 help to address and further investigate the critical nursing and nurse faculty shortages in the U.S. by establishing a National Health Workforce Advisory Council, a National Center for Health Workforce Information and Analysis, a Health Workforce Investment Grant program for states, and a set aside for Health Workforce Innovations Research.

The programs will assist in gathering data and approaching the shortages of all health professions in a way that is systematic and comprehensive. Specifically, the Workforce Investment Grant program will allow states to direct additional federal funding into programs that are working to address the state's workforce challenges. The 25% reservation of these funds for nursing programs will expand the pipeline of new nurses and strengthen our entire healthcare system. Moreover, the Health Workforce Innovations Research set aside will provide necessary guidance, innovation, and technical assistance to future programs addressing the shortages in the health professions, including nursing.

Our membership greatly appreciates your efforts to assist the nursing profession. The passage of H.R. 1946 would offer states more direct support in meeting their own unique nursing workforce challenges as well as those of the nation. If AACN can be of help to you, please do not hesitate to contact Suzanne Begeny, Director of Government Affairs, at AACN at 202-463-6930 ext. 247 or sbegeny@aacn.nche.edu.

Sincerely,

Fay Raines

Fay Raines, PhD, RN
President

ADVANCING HIGHER EDUCATION IN NURSING