Deal Reached to Advert “Fiscal Cliff”

On January 1, 2013, the House (by a vote of 257-167) and Senate (by a vote of 89-8) passed a deal that would prevent the American economy from going over the "fiscal cliff." The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (H.R. 8) addresses a series of tax provisions and delays the sequestration (automatic cuts to discretionary spending) by two months to a new deadline of March 1, 2013. The bill calls for a reduction in the amount that would be cut through sequestration by $24 billion over 9 years. In order to delay the sequester, the legislation lowers the spending caps outlined in the Budget Control Act in FY 2013 and FY 2014. Cuts will be made to both defense discretionary spending and non-defense discretionary spending. The legislation also addresses the "doc fix" (Medicare reimbursement for healthcare providers) through a one-year extension.

AACN does not have an official position on the entirety of this legislation. However, the association did advocate with the broader health and education communities to request that Congress find a balanced approach to sequestration. Because the bill delays these automatic cuts, we will continue to monitor the negotiations and keep you apprised of Congressional actions that affect nursing and other health programs of interest to our members.

Title VIII Funding Announcement

The FY 2013 Nursing Workforce Diversity Funding Opportunity Announcement HRSA-13-191 has been released and is now posted on Grants.gov. Nursing Workforce Diversity grants are awarded to increase nursing education opportunities for individuals who are from disadvantaged backgrounds (including racial and ethnic minorities under-represented among registered nurses) by providing (1) student scholarships or stipends for diploma or associate degree nurses to enter a bridge or degree completion program, and (2) student scholarships or stipends for accelerated nursing degree programs, pre-entry preparation, advanced education preparation, and retention activities.

View Program Details for more information. Apply in Grants.gov by March 8, 2013.

A Technical Assistance Webinar will be offered January 16, 2013 from 1:00-3:00pm ET.
To access the Webinar, visit: https://hrsa.connectsolutions.com/r27r8pnnwpc/.
Call-in: 1-888-469-0789
Passcode: 2279307

For more updates and notices visit the Division of Nursing website and sign up for our ListServ.

Scholarship Programs Renamed Under NURSE Corps

The Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program (NELRP) and Nursing Scholarship Program (NSP) have a new name and identity. These programs now fall under NURSE Corps: Caring for Communities in Need. These programs have supported a community of nurses and nurse practitioners since 2002.
Through the NURSE Corps Scholarship Program (formerly the Nursing Scholarship Program) and the NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program (formerly the Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program), NURSE Corps is empowering and enabling nurses to follow their passion for helping and healing others.

The application cycle for the 2013 NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program (formerly the Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program) is now open. The NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program (LRP) offers Registered Nurses and certain Advanced Practice Registered Nurses an opportunity to repay 60 percent of their outstanding qualifying educational loans in exchange for a two-year service commitment at a Critical Shortage Facility.

NURSE Corps LRP participants may receive additional loan repayment for a third year of service. The NURSE Corps LRP is adapting to the increasing demand for NPs by reserving up to half of the award funding for NPs; the remaining funding will continue to support RNs and nurse faculty.

To learn more about the funding preferences, please review the application and program guidance at http://www.hrsa.gov/loanscholarships/repayment/nursing/guidance.pdf.

The deadline to apply to NURSE Corps LRP is February 28, 2013, at 7:30 pm ET. Please help us spread the word to potential applicants. To learn more about NURSE Corps LRP eligibility and requirements, visit: http://www.hrsa.gov/loanscholarships/repayment/nursing/guidance.pdf.

AACN Mourns the Loss of Senator Inouye

Senator Daniel Inouye (D-HI) passed away December 17, 2013 after a week-long hospitalization due to respiratory complications. A long-time champion of nursing, Senator Inouye played a significant role in the advancement of nursing education, research, and practice. He was instrumental in the foundation of the National Institute of Nursing Research. AACN President Jane Kirschling and CEO Polly Bednash issued the following statement following his death:

“The nursing profession has lost a tremendous and inspiring champion. Senator Daniel Inouye (D-HI), was a true statesman who advocated tirelessly throughout his career to advance nursing education, research, and practice. He attributed his profound respect for the profession to the nurses who cared for him after the loss of his arm during combat in WWII. We fondly remember hearing the story of how the nurses provided him “tough love,” which he noted led to his ability to adapt to his injury. AACN had the pleasure of working with his office since our doors opened over 40 years ago. Our longstanding collaboration began with efforts to recognize the important role of nursing research in improving healthcare delivery. Senator Inouye was the lead advocate who helped establish the National Center for Nursing Research and later championed its transition to the National Institute of Nursing Research.

As the Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, he understood the critical importance of federal funding for nursing and healthcare programs and worked across the aisle to ensure these programs received increased funding. In recent years, he advanced legislation and implored the Federal Trade Commission to help ensure that advanced practice registered nurses are able to practice to the full extent of their education and training. As a symbol of our appreciation, AACN recognized the Senator in 2007 with our Congressional Appreciation Award. AACN is honored to have joined forces with Senator Inouye who was a dedicated advocate for nursing and a great American. He will be deeply missed.”

Register for Webinar on Academic Progression

AACN and the National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing (N-OADN) are collaborating to advance our shared goals related to academic progression in nursing. As part of this collaboration, AACN and N-OADN are producing a three-part Webinar series for our members highlighting initiatives in academic progression and how institutions are
currently working together to graduate students through higher levels of education. The second Webinar in this series, “Collaborative Academic Progression Models: Showcasing Successful Partnerships,” will be held on **Tuesday, January 22, 2013 from 1:00-2:00 PM ET**. This Webinar will feature an exciting panel of four nursing experts who will share successful models for academic progression through their respective institutions’ partnerships.

Marcia Maurer, PhD, RN, Dean of the School of Nursing, Southern Illinois University, Anne G. Perry, EdD, RN, FAAN, Associate Dean for Academic Programs at Southern Illinois University, and Donna Meyer, MSN, RN, Dean of Health Sciences, Lewis and Clark Community College, will share insights and best practices related to their schools’ RN to BSN articulation agreement. Libby Mahaffey, PhD, RN, Dean, Nursing and Allied Health, Hinds Community College, and Patricia Waltman, EdD, RN, CNNP, Associate Dean, Academic Affairs and Accreditation, will discuss how Hinds Community College participates in the University of Mississippi Medical Center’s Pathways to Advanced Practice Nursing model to graduate students through its RN to MSN program.

**To register for this Webinar, visit:** [http://community.aacn.nche.edu/registration/register.cfm?reg=338&evt=GA122](http://community.aacn.nche.edu/registration/register.cfm?reg=338&evt=GA122).

AACN and N-OADN have also published a brochure for associate degree-prepared nurse and nursing students on taking the next step in their nursing education by pursuing a baccalaureate or graduate nursing degree. To access the brochure, see: [http://www.aacn.nche.edu/students/your-nursing-career/Academic-Progression-Brochure.pdf](http://www.aacn.nche.edu/students/your-nursing-career/Academic-Progression-Brochure.pdf).

AACN and N-OADN are proud to offer these resources in support of the recommendations set forth in the Institute of Medicine’s 2010 report *Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, which states, “Nurses should achieve higher levels of education and training through an improved education system that promotes seamless academic progression.” AACN is committed to working with other stakeholders to implement all of the recommendations of this landmark report.

**National Governors Association Releases Report on Scope of Practice**

The National Governors Association (NGA) recently released a report titled *The Role of Nurse Practitioners in Meeting Increasing Demand for Primary Care*. This publication investigates the differences in scope of practice rules and licensure across states and the impact this has on care. The report also examines the degree to which these rules deviate from the evidence-based research on appropriate activities for nurse practitioners. With the demand for primary care services already beginning to exceed supply in many states, NGA concludes that states could increase access to this care by allowing advanced practice nurses (APRNs) to practice to the full extent of their training. Research shows that ARNS are able to provide many primary care services as well as, or better than, physicians. Therefore, the report argues APRNs may be cost effective way in dealing with increasing demand for primary care services.


**Sebelius Will Stay in Cabinet**

The Obama Administration has announced that Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius will remain in her current posting for the president’s second term. Secretary Sebelius has held her position at HHS since 2009.

Secretary Sebelius has extensive experience in healthcare policy and public service, including having served as the governor of Kansas and as the Kansas state insurance commissioner. Secretary Sebelius is the 21st Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.
Sponsor the 2013 AACN Student Policy Summit Today!

The fourth annual Student Policy Summit promises to be the most successful Summit yet! Next year’s Summit, to be held March 17-19, 2013 in Washington, DC, has already reached attendee capacity. There are, however, opportunities available for AACN schools of nursing and other organizations to sponsor the Summit. Depending on the level of support, sponsors can receive complimentary student registrations, place personalized items or information in the conference bags given to attendees, have their logos printed on Summit water bottles, and more.

The Student Policy Summit brings together nursing students from around the nation to participate in a three-day conference exploring advocacy and nursing’s role in the policy process. The Summit empowers student attendees with the political knowledge and savvy necessary to be successful advocates of their profession and to understand how policy influences their careers. As America’s healthcare system continues to undergo transformations to expand access to care, the voices of students are vital in shaping the future of care delivery. AACN is dedicated to strengthening nursing’s voice in the policy arena to ensure that America’s patients continue to receive the high-quality nursing services. Summit attendees are provided a rich experience that includes discussion sessions with leadership from federal departments and agencies, as well as the opportunity to meet with members of Congress and their staff to discuss issues relating to nursing education, research, and policy.

For a complete list of sponsorship packages available, please see: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/SPSSponsorPackages.pdf. Summit sponsorship opportunities are limited and awarded on a first-come-first-served basis. Sponsorship requests should be submitted by January 18, 2013.

To find out more or to become a sponsor, contact AACN Government Affairs Manager Lauren Inouye at linouye@aacn.nche.edu or 202-463-6930 ext. 271.

New Institute of Medicine Report Finds Americans Unhealthy

The Institute of Medicine (IoM) recently published a new report titled U.S. Health in International Perspective: Shorter Lives, Poorer Health. The research showed that, compared to most other high-income countries, Americans have shorter lifespans and are more likely to be sick or injured. According to the report’s authors, the cost of health care in America will only increase as today’s unhealthy children become tomorrow’s unhealthy adults.

Although the American healthcare system is one of the most advanced in the world, the IOM concluded that Americans are more likely to engage in activities and behaviors that are unhealthy. In addition, they found that the U.S. has relatively high poverty and income inequality rates, but that even highly advantaged Americans are less healthy than their international counterparts.

For more information on the report or to purchase the full text, see: http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=13497#description.