March 19, 2015

Dear Chairmen Cole and Blunt and Ranking Members DeLauro and Murray:

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) recommends $244 million for the Nursing Workforce Development Programs (Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act) and $150 million for the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR, National Institutes of Health) in the fiscal year (FY) 2016 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill.

As the national voice for baccalaureate and graduate nursing education, AACN represents over 760 schools of nursing that educate over 450,000 students and employ nearly 17,000 full-time faculty members. Collectively, these institutions produce approximately half of our nation’s registered nurses and all advanced practice registered nurses, nurse faculty, and nurse researchers. Our members are committed to preparing a highly-educated nursing workforce and strengthening the foundation of nursing science, and they rely on the critical assistance that the Title VIII programs and the NINR afford our students, faculty, and academic institutions.

As our nation’s healthcare system transforms and more services are provided outside the hospital walls, nurses must be educated for these opportunities and challenges. In operation for over 50 years, the Title VIII programs require strong, sustained funding to meet the growing demand for nursing services at the community, state, and national levels. Title VIII programs directly contribute to the health and wellness of America by ensuring that recipients are able to enter into the profession and care for patients across the health continuum. Necessary to provide this care is the evidence created through nursing research. Nursing science developed by the NINR is focused on reducing rates of costly, chronic diseases, promoting patient and family-centered wellness, while improving quality of life. Moreover, NINR training programs develop nurse scientists who often serve as faculty members.

AACN recognizes the challenging fiscal climate and the difficult decisions that must be made by your subcommittees. We urge you to help ensure America’s health is a top priority by supporting the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs at $244 million and the NINR at $150 million in FY 2016. If AACN can be of any assistance to and your subcommittees, please do not hesitate to contact AACN’s Senior Director of Government Affairs and Health Policy, Dr. Suzanne Miyamoto, at (202) 463-6930, ext. 247 or smiyamoto@aacn.nche.edu.

ADVANCING HIGHER EDUCATION IN NURSING

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Sincerely,

[Signature]

Eileen T. Breslin, PhD, RN, FAAN
President

CC:
Representative Mike Simpson
Representative Steve Womack
Representative Chuck Fleischmann
Representative Andy Harris, MD
Representative Martha Roby
Representative Charlie Dent
Representative Scott Rigell
Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard
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