



**For Immediate Release**

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**HPNEC Statement on the Senate Appropriations Committee's FY 24 Labor-HHS-Education Spending Bill**

**July 28, 2023** - The Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition (HPNEC) appreciates the Senate Appropriations Committee's bipartisan work to fund the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)'s Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs.

We are pleased that the Committee's spending bill increases investment in the Title VII geriatrics and Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training programs and in the Title VIII Nurse Education, Practice, and Retention and Nursing Faculty Loan Repayment programs. We also appreciate the bill's continued funding for the Title VII and VIII diversity pathway programs. Studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of such pathway programs in strengthening students' academic records, improving test scores, and helping disadvantaged students pursue careers in the health professions. In contrast, the House subcommittee proposal to eliminate Centers of Excellence, the Health Careers Opportunity Program, and the Nursing Workforce Diversity Program would hamper efforts to connect students from rural, underrepresented, and disadvantaged backgrounds to health careers.

At the same time, we are concerned with the Committee's proposal to cut funding from the HRSA Title VII Medical Student Education (MSE) program. Last year, the MSE program supported nearly 3,000 students, 37% of whom come from disadvantaged backgrounds and 32% of whom come from rural backgrounds. Additionally, while we realize that the committee was working under a constrained spending allocation, the need to address our nation's workforce challenges far outpaces the resources this bill would provide across all the Title VII and VIII programs. Increased investment in these programs is essential to helping address health workforce shortages in critical areas of need and shape the future health workforce at all stages of the continuum.

The HRSA Title VII and Title VIII programs have proven successful in recruiting, training, and supporting nurses, physicians, physician assistants, mental health providers, oral health professionals, and other health professionals critical to addressing the country's evolving health care needs and future unexpected crises. We hope to continue to work with the Committee moving forward to ensure robust investment in the Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs. Ensuring that our health workforce is equipped to serve the nation's ever-growing needs and is prepared for the health care demands of tomorrow is an urgent, key national priority.

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*The Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition (HPNEC) is an alliance of more than 90 national organizations representing schools, students, health professionals, and communities dedicated to ensuring that the health care workforce is trained to meet the needs of our diverse population. Together, the members of HPNEC advocate for adequate and continued support for the health professions and nursing workforce development programs authorized under Titles VII and VIII of the Public Health Service Act and administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Additional information about HPNEC is available at [hpneec.org](http://hpneec.org).*