



April 28, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
H-222, US Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, US Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, US Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, US Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer,

On behalf of the 57 undersigned organizations representing the Nursing Community Coalition (NCC), we would like to thank you for Congress's quick and decisive action to pass H.R. 748, – the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Collectively, NCC represents the more than four million registered nurses (RNs), advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) (including certified nurse-midwives, nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, and certified registered nurse anesthetists), nurse leaders, nursing students, faculty, and researchers that have been on the frontlines during this public health crisis. H.R. 748 strives to ensure the health and safety of our nursing workforce. We are especially pleased to see a number of shared NCC priorities included in the final bill, such as, funding for personal protective equipment (PPE), reauthorizing the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs, authorizing NPs and CNSs to certify home health care services, and strengthening the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps.

As conversations continue about how to best support our nation and our nurses throughout this public health challenge, we urge you to include the following priorities in any future legislative package to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Increase Funding for Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs:** All Title VIII programs are essential to meeting the current COVID-19 challenge and preparing future nursing workforce for the next health care emergency. For over 50 years, these programs have supported current nurses, nursing students, and the nursing workforce

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pipeline. Title VIII programs help to ensure the health and well being of all communities, especially in rural and underserved areas. Given these unprecedented times, investments in nursing education and the workforce are imperative. Therefore, we support the Senate proposal of \$15 billion in supplemental funding to be allocated for all Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs, including at least \$5 billion specifically for the Nurse Corps Loan Repayment and Scholarship programs, that can be used until expended.

- **Protect and Support Nurses and APRNs on the Frontlines:** As we continue to address the safety and well-being of our frontline healthcare workforce, including nurses, it is essential that we not only ensure an adequate supply of PPE, but that we also compensate essential workers for their services. We urge you to create a dedicated funding stream that invests in nurses combatting COVID-19. These funds could be used to retrain nurses that have been laid off or have been working in other departments, support our nurses' mental health needs for those responding to this pandemic, address infrastructure necessities, and provide for the safety of our current and future nursing workforce.
- **Strengthen Investments in Public Health:** We appreciate Congress' significant investments in public health during this pandemic, but more aid is needed. Since 2008, the local public health departments alone have lost more than 55,000 public health jobs, which include nurses.¹ This drastic shortage of public health professionals has been brought into stark relief during the current crisis. We must not only provide a short-term injection of funding to bolster the public health nursing workforce, but commit to develop a long-term solution in the investment of a national public health service pipeline of nurses and other health care professionals.
- **Support Nursing Associations and Professional Organizations:** Nursing associations and professional organizations afford a critical resource to our members by setting the standards for practice, establishing patient care guidelines, providing continuing education and professional development, and creating a forum for collective action and future planning. However, NCC member organizations have experienced cancelled events and conferences that directly impact nurses across the nation and the sustainability of the association. We encourage Congress to include nursing associations and professional organizations, such as those who are 501(c) 6 organizations, in any future aid to small businesses.
- **Invest in Nursing Research:** The National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) provides critical support to nurse scientists and is foundational to of evidence-based nursing care.

¹ National Association of County & City Health Officials. "The Forces of Change in America's Local Public Health System: 2018. <http://nacchoprofilestudy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/2018-Forces-of-Change-Main-Report.pdf>

We ask that any future legislation include additional funding to support the National Institutes of Health and NINR.

We urge Congress to include these shared priorities in any future COVID-19 package and as you work to continue to support the nursing workforce. Again, we thank you for your efforts to combat the novel coronavirus through the CARES Act and look forward to working with you on any future legislative packages. If the Nursing Community Coalition can be of any assistance to you or your staff during these unprecedented times, please do not hesitate to contact the coalition's Executive Director, Rachel Stevenson, at rstevenson@thenursingcommunity.org or at 202-463-6930, ext. 271.

Sincerely,

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing
American Academy of Emergency Nurse Practitioners
Academy of Neonatal Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses
American Association of Neuroscience Nurses
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists
American Association of Nurse Practitioners
American Association of Post-Acute Care Nursing
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Nephrology Nurses Association
American Nurses Association
American Nursing Informatics Association
American Organization for Nursing Leadership
American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association, Inc.
American Public Health Association, Public Health Nursing Section
American Psychiatric Nurses Association
American Society for Pain Management Nursing
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses
Association for Radiologic and Imaging Nursing
Association of Community Health Nursing Educators
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care
Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses
Association of Public Health Nurses
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
Association of Veterans Affairs Nurse Anesthetists
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service
Dermatology Nurses' Association

Emergency Nurses Association
Friends of the National Institute of Nursing Research
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association
Infusion Nurses Society
International Association of Forensic Nurses
International Society for Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
National Association of Hispanic Nurses
National Association of Neonatal Nurses
National Association of Neonatal Nurses Practitioners
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of School Nurses
National Black Nurses Association
National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers
National League for Nursing
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs
Oncology Nursing Society
Organization for Associate Degree Nursing
Pediatric Endocrinology Nursing Society
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association
Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates
Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society

CC:

House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer
House Majority Whip Jim Clyburn
House Minority Whip Steve Scalise
Senate Majority Whip John Thune
Senate Minority Whip Richard Durbin
Chairman Charles Grassley, Senate Finance Committee
Ranking Member, Ron Wyden, Senate Finance Committee
Chairman Lamar Alexander, Senate HELP Committee
Ranking Member, Patty Murray, Senate HELP Committee
Chairman Richard Shelby, Senate Appropriations Committee
Vice Chairman Patrick Leahy, Senate Appropriations Committee
Chairman Roy Blunt, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Ranking Member, Patty Murray, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Chairman Richard Neal, House Ways & Means Committee
Ranking Member, Kevin Brady, House Ways & Means Committee

Chairman Frank Pallone, House Energy & Commerce Committee

Ranking Member, Greg Walden, House Energy & Commerce Committee

Chairwoman Nita Lowey, House Appropriations Committee

Ranking Member, Kay Granger, House Appropriations Committee

Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies

Ranking Member, Tom Cole, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies