



Testimony of the Nursing Community Coalition
Prepared for the U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) &
National Institutes of Health (NIH)

May 21, 2026

Submitted by the Nursing Community Coalition

We recognize how crucial federal investments for the nursing workforce and the nursing pipeline are to our patients and the health of our nation. Given these realities, the Nursing Community Coalition (NCC) respectfully requests that Congress continue to invest in nursing education, workforce, and research in Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 by supporting **at least \$610 million for the Nursing Workforce Development Programs** (authorized under Title VIII of the *Public Health Service Act* [42 U.S.C. 296 et seq.] and administered by HRSA), and by supporting **at least \$215 million for the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR)**. With recent efforts to consolidate programs across HHS, we strongly urge the Committee to maintain these innovative and collaborative nursing programs in FY 2027 appropriations bills to ensure our nation's nurses continue to have the resources they need to provide high-quality care to all Americans.

The Nursing Community Coalition is comprised of national nursing organizations who work together to advance health care issues that impact nursing education, research, practice, and regulation. Collectively, the NCC represents Registered Nurses (RNs), Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs),¹ nurse leaders, boards of nursing, students, faculty, and scientists, as well as other nurses with advanced degrees. As the largest segment of the health care profession,² nursing is involved at every point of care.

Providing High Quality Nursing Care Throughout the Nation

As we continue to confront today's health care challenges and plan for tomorrow, it is imperative that we continue to invest in our nation's nursing workforce. As the largest dedicated federal funding for nurses, the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs are smart investments that bolster and sustain the nation's nursing pipeline by addressing all aspects of nursing workforce demand. We recognize that supporting health care in all communities, including in our rural and underserved areas, requires continued investments in nursing. This is especially true as the need for a well-educated nursing workforce is expected to grow dramatically in the next few years. In particular, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects the demand for RNs to increase by 5% through 2034, representing 189,100 job openings each

¹ APRNs include certified nurse-midwives (CNMs), certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs), clinical nurse specialists (CNSs) and nurse practitioners (NPs).

² Smith, Sean and Blank, Andrew. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (June 2023) Healthcare Occupations: Characteristics of the Employed. Slide Two: Employment in the 25 largest healthcare occupations, 2022. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/spotlight/2023/healthcare-occupations-in-2022/>

year.³ The demand for most APRNs is also expected to grow by 35%.⁴ From scholarship and loan repayments, to supporting APRNs and future faculty, Title VIII programs offer a strategic and cost-effective approach to supporting our nursing workforce. In fact, Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs directly connect patients with high-quality nursing care in community health centers, hospitals, long-term care facilities, local and state health departments, schools, workplaces, and patients' homes.

Each program under Title VIII is unique and plays a critical role in educating, training, and supporting our nation's nursing workforce. For example, in Academic Year 2022-2023, the Advanced Nursing Education programs, which help APRN students and nurses to practice on the frontlines and in rural and underserved areas throughout the country, supported more than 8,000 students, many of whom were trained in medically underserved areas and primary care settings.⁵ Supporting our current and future nurses is essential and is done under the Nurse Corps scholarship and loan repayment program. Under the Nurse Corps, we have seen more than three-quarters of the providers employed in community based settings and 20% in rural communities.⁶ Further, programs like the Nurse, Education, Practice, Quality and Retention (NEPQR) aim to support developing, distributing, and retaining a nursing workforce that can adapt to the population's changing health care needs and provide the highest quality of care for all.⁷ In Academic Year 2022-2023, more than 10,300 nurses and nursing students were supported under NEPQR.⁸

Funding for Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs must meet levels reflecting the nursing population it serves in order to achieve maximum efficiency. This funding is even more critical given the Department of Education's decision to explicitly exclude post-baccalaureate nursing degrees from the list of "professional" degrees, which will have a direct impact on student loan caps for nursing students, our future frontline providers. With more than five million nurses throughout the country,⁹ and increased demand for more nurses to serve our communities, Title VIII programs are a strategic investment that needs elevated support in FY 2027. Therefore, the Nursing Community Coalition respectfully **requests at least \$610 million for the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs in FY 2027.**

Improving Patient Care Through Scientific Research and Innovation

We have also seen the importance of science in the discussion of cures and preparedness. As the only Institute or Center at NIH that directly supports research by our nurse scientists, NINR promotes patient-centered care across the life continuum. NINR's scientists and researchers have made groundbreaking, lifesaving discoveries in the areas of prevention and care for low

³ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2026). Occupational Outlook Handbook-Registered Nurses. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/registered-nurses.htm>

⁴ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2026). Occupational Outlook Handbook-Nurse Anesthetists, Nurse Midwives, and Nurse Practitioners. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/nurse-anesthetists-nurse-midwives-and-nurse-practitioners.htm>

⁵ Health Resources and Services Administration. Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Justification. Pages 143-146. Retrieved from: <https://web.archive.org/web/20250308232021/https://www.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/hrsa/about/budget/budget-justification-fy2025.pdf>

⁶ Ibid., 157-161.

⁷ Ibid., 151-153.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (2026). Active RN Licenses: A profile of nursing licensure in the U.S. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncsbn.org/active-rn-licenses>

birthweight in infants,¹⁰ symptom management for those with Alzheimer's,¹¹ and reducing pressure sores through the development of the Braden Scale.¹² The translational research of our nation's nurses and scientists is essential to developing new evidence-based practices to care for all patients. Through increased investments in NINR, nurse researchers and scientists will be able to continue their invaluable work at the forefront of disease prevention, patient care, and recovery. It is imperative that we continue to support the necessary scientific research, which is why the **Nursing Community Coalition respectfully requests at least \$215 million for NINR in FY 2027.**

A FY 2027 budget that reduces funding for the Title VIII programs and NINR would have devastating impacts on patient care, which is why bold investments in these nursing programs are so vital. We appreciate Congress' ongoing support of America's health and our nation's nurses. As you continue this work, we look forward to partnering with you and urge you to **invest in our nation's nurses by providing at least \$610 million for Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs and at least \$215 million for the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) in FY 2027.** Thank you for safeguarding the public's well-being by putting forward strategic investments for these critical programs.

61 Members of the Nursing Community Coalition Submitting this Testimony

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses
Academy of Neonatal Nursing
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing
American Academy of Emergency Nurse Practitioners
American Academy of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses
American Association of Heart Failure Nurses
American Association of Neuroscience Nurses
American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology
American Association of Nurse Practitioners
American Association of Occupational Health Nurses
American Association of Post-Acute Care Nursing
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Nephrology Nurses Association
American Nurses Association
American Organization for Nursing Leadership
American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association, Inc.
American Psychiatric Nurses Association
American Public Health Association, Public Health Nursing Section
American Society for Pain Management Nursing
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

¹⁰ Cantelon, Philip L. PhD. National Institute of Nursing Research, NINR, Bringing Science to Life. (September 2010). Page 87. Retrieved from: https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/NINR_History_Book_508.pdf

¹¹ Ibid., 180-185.

¹² The National Institute of Nursing Research, Changing Practice, Changing Lives: 10 Landmark Nursing Research Studies. Page 5. Retrieved from: <https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/docs/10-landmark-nursing-research-studies.pdf>

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 Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service
Dermatology Nurses' Association
DNP's of Color
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 Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
National Association of Hispanic Nurses
National Association of Neonatal Nurses
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 Council of State Boards of Nursing
National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers
National Hartford Center of Gerontological Nursing Excellence
National League for Nursing
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs
NurseTRUST
Oncology Nursing Society
Organization for Associate Degree Nursing
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association
Society of Pediatric Nurses
Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates
Wound, Ostomy, and Continence Nurses Society