

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 26, 2013

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Senate Appropriations Committee
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Senate Appropriations Committee
156 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin, and Ranking Member Moran:

We respectfully request that the Nursing Workforce Development Programs (Title VIII of the *Public Health Service Act*, administered by HRSA) receive \$251 million in Fiscal Year 2014. Title VIII programs help to ensure that nursing care reaches our nation's most vulnerable populations and underserved communities.

Now, more than ever, our nation must prepare to increase our nursing workforce. America's healthcare system is already stressed due to the aging Baby Boomer population, the growing incidence of chronic diseases, and a shortage of providers in all specialties, particularly primary care. Nurses are integral to addressing these healthcare demands as their care crosses the continuum and is linked to lowering costs, improving quality, and increasing access.

For nearly five decades, the Title VIII programs have bolstered the nursing workforce by increasing the number of Registered Nurses and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses, as well as the nurse faculty who educate them. Most critically, the programs ensure nurses are providing care to the communities that are in desperate need of their services. The Nursing Education Loan Repayment and Nursing Scholarship Programs (now the NURSE Corps), which provide loan forgiveness and scholarship aid in exchange for service in a critical shortage facility, link nurses to communities that struggle to retain healthcare providers. In FY 2012, the Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program committed to supporting 1,452 nurses working in these facilities. In addition, the Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship Program graduated 1,796 nursing students last year who are currently serving in underserved areas.

Nurses are an integral member of the healthcare team responding to our nation's most devastating crises and providing care to patients and their families when they are at their weakest. By investing in Title VIII, we invest in the care they provide.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration of our request and understand the difficult decisions your Subcommittee will face in this fiscal climate. Support for Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs is a direct investment in the nursing workforce, our nation's well-being, and the sustainability of our healthcare system as a whole.

Sincerely,



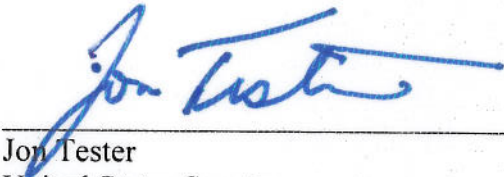
Jeff Merkley
United States Senator



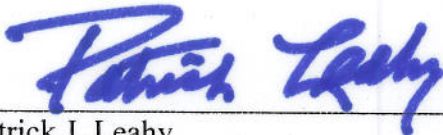
Al Franken
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Jon Tester
United States Senator



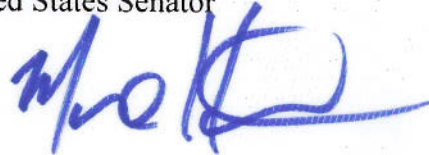
Patrick J. Leahy
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



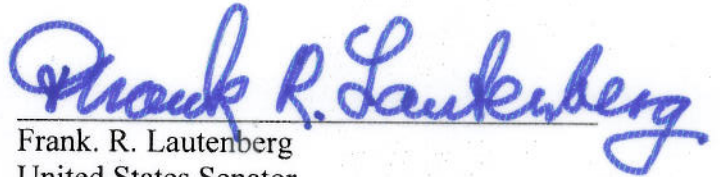
Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator




Martin Heinrich
United States Senator




Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



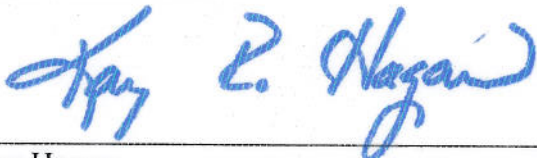
Frank R. Lautenberg
United States Senator



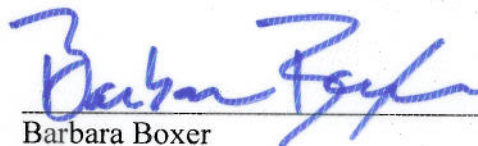
Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



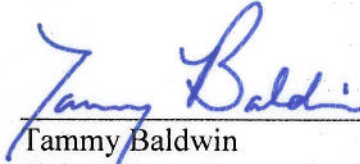
Kay Hagan
United States Senator



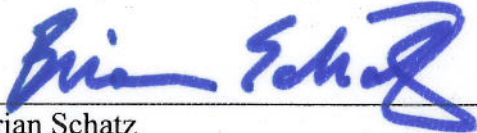
Barbara Boxer
United States Senator



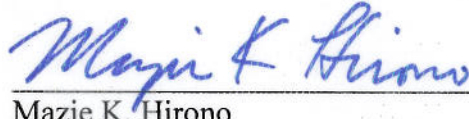
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



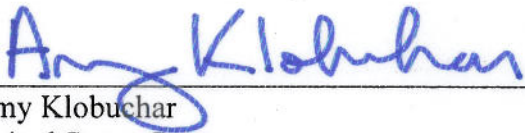
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



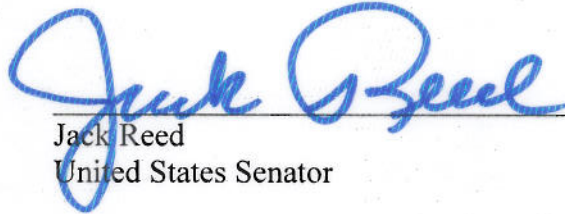
Brian Schatz
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



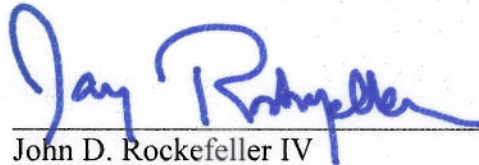
Carl Levin
United States Senator



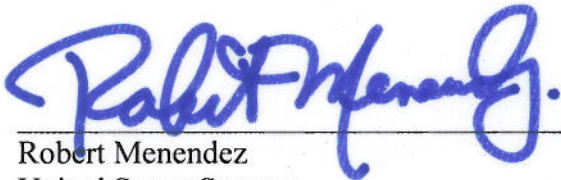
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



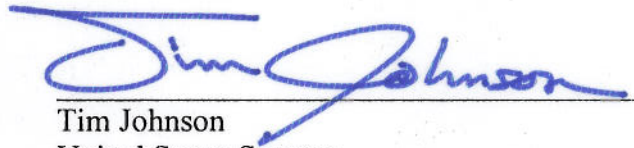
Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senator



John D. Rockefeller IV
United States Senator



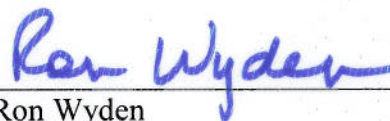
Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Tim Johnson
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator