



WRITTEN TESTIMONY FOR THE RECORD

HOUSE ENERGY AND COMMERCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH HEARING
“EXAMINING LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE AND TREATMENT”

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ON BEHALF OF THE NURSING COMMUNITY COALITION

DECEMBER 9, 2015

On behalf of the 55 undersigned national professional nursing organizations representing the Nursing Community coalition, we respectfully submit this testimony for the record regarding H.R. 2713, the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Reauthorization Act of 2015, to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Health. This legislation would reauthorize the Nursing Workforce Development programs (Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act) and propose four technical changes to modernize the programs. The Nursing Community represents nearly one million practicing nurses, nursing students, and nursing faculty, and is committed to improving the health and health care of our nation by collaborating to support the education, practice, and research of registered nurses (RNs) and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs).

For over five decades, the Title VIII programs have helped to build the supply and distribution of qualified nurses to meet our nation’s healthcare needs. As the largest dedicated source of federal funding for nursing education, these programs bolster nursing education at all levels, support nurses in the workforce, and provide assistance for institutions involved in the education and training of these clinicians. Regional demands for nursing services, coupled with an aging

nursing workforce, contribute to a projected need that will outweigh supply if current entry rates into the profession continue.¹ Therefore, it is essential that our nursing pipeline has the support of Title VIII programs to address these workforce challenges and increase the number of individuals entering into the registered nursing workforce. Our organizations' members deeply rely on these programs to foster high-quality care delivery in the wide range of settings where they practice, teach, and lead in improving health care.

Moreover, Title VIII programs are specifically designed to help address challenges and barriers to educating a greater number of RNs, APRNs, and other nurses with advanced degrees. For example, the Nurse Education, Practice, Quality, and Retention (NEPQR) Program supported 9,448 nursing students in Academic Year 2013-2014.² NEPQR helps schools of nursing, academic health centers, nurse managed health clinics, and healthcare facilities strengthen the RN workforce. NEPQR also allows for programs to be created that are reflective of emerging priorities. For example, in FY 2015, NEPQR funded a number of schools through the Veterans' Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.³ Designed to assist Veterans in achieving their nursing degree, this program allows these Servicemen and Servicewomen to matriculate into the nursing workforce building upon their experience and training from their military careers. This is timely as our nation identifies ways to help improve care for Veterans and strengthens a health professions workforce that understands the unique needs of Veterans and their caregivers.

¹ Auerbach, D. I., Buerhaus, P., & Staiger, D. O. (2015). Will the rn workforce weather the retirement of the baby boomers? *Medical Care*, 53(10), 850-856.

² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2015). *Health Resources and Services Administration Fiscal Year 2016 Justification of Estimates for Appropriations Committees*.

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Health Resources and Services Administration Data Warehouse. Retrieved from:

https://ersrs.hrsa.gov/ReportServer/Pages/ReportViewer.aspx?/HGDW_Reports/FindGrants/GRANT_FIND&ACTIVITY=UFI&rs:Format=HTML4.0.

H.R. 2713 would amend the statute to allow for four technical modernizations that would align with current nursing roles and practice. The first and second changes would include a definition of the Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) in the Advanced Education Nursing (AEN) Grants program [42 U.S.C. S 296j] and add the CNS among the list of nursing specialties to serve on the National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice [42 U.S.C. S 297t]. CNSs are graduate-prepared nurses who specialize in a specific area of practice defined by a population, setting, or disease type. As one of the four APRN roles, these two changes would align with the APRN Consensus Model and create parity in statute.⁴

The third technical change would amend the AEN Grants program [42 U.S.C. S 296j] to include the Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) in the definition of advanced education nurses. CNLs are graduate-prepared nurses who lead in the coordination of patient care by evaluating patient outcomes, assessing cohort risk, and redirecting patient care plans as necessary. Including CNLs would provide them equal opportunity to participate in the AEN Grants program with other graduate degree programs that can apply for these dollars.

The fourth technical change would add Nurse-Managed Health Clinics (NMHCs) to the list of eligible entities in the definition section of the Title VIII statute [42 U.S.C. S 296]. NMHCs are recognized as a key example of efficient and cost-effective health care. NMHCs are successful in providing individualized primary care that includes health promotion, disease prevention and

⁴ APRN Consensus Work Group. (July 7, 2008). Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification & Education. Retrieved from: https://ncsbn.org/Consensus_Model_for_APRN_Regulation_July_2008.pdf.

early detection, health screenings and teaching, management of chronic and acute care, and counseling. These care sites often focus on populations that face provider or service shortages and also serve as clinical training sites for nursing and other health professions students.

As our healthcare system continues to undergo transformations that necessitate a more highly-educated nursing workforce, it is critical that Title VIII programs are sustained through reauthorization so their impact on our nation's health is not interrupted. The Nursing Community thanks the Subcommittee for the opportunity to provide insight on the importance of the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs and why the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Reauthorization Act of 2015 is critical to their future sustainability. We urge the Subcommittee and full Committee to advance this valuable legislation. If the Nursing Community can be of assistance, please contact Dr. Suzanne Miyamoto at 202-463-6930, or

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Sincerely,

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing
American Academy of Nursing
American Assembly for Men in 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 Occupational Health Nurses
American Association of Nurse Practitioners
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Nephrology Nurses' Association
American Nurses Association
American Organization of Nurse Executives
American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association
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 Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service
Dermatology Nurses' Association
Emergency Nurses Association
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association
Infusion Nurses Society
International Association of Forensic Nurses
International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses
National American Arab Nurses Association
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
National Association of Hispanic Nurses
National Association of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners
National Association of Neonatal Nurses
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of School Nurses
National Black Nurses Association
National Council of State Boards of Nursing
National Gerontological Nursing Association
National League for Nursing
National Nursing Centers 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
Public Health Nursing Section, American Public Health Association
Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates
The Quad Council of Public Health Nursing Organizations