

February 9, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Boehner  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Obey  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education and Related Agencies  
H-218 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education and Related Agencies  
2358 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Republican Leader Boehner, Chairman Obey, and Ranking Members Lewis and Tiahrt:

The undersigned nursing organizations respectfully request that during the negotiations of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the \$600 million House provision for nursing and health professions training be included in the final stimulus package passed by both the House and Senate. A significant portion of this funding would be dedicated to filling the nation's current need for well over 140,000 registered nursing positions by providing a much needed increase in funding for the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs administered by HRSA/HHS.

At a time when millions of Americans are unemployed, good paying registered nursing jobs are going unfilled in our hospitals, nursing homes, health departments, and community health centers. Nursing positions are in great demand as there is currently an 8.1% vacancy rate across the country according to American Hospital Association. Funding for nurse training will lead to real jobs because a very real need exists. The demand for nursing jobs can only be met with nurses graduating from these training programs. Funding for nurse training will meaningfully contribute to the reduction of the unemployment rate.

Moreover, the *New York Times* recently reported on the Japanese experience with a stimulus plan. It was noted that "spending in knowledge-based services like health care and education" brings larger benefits to advanced economies like Japan's and ours by inference. The article further noted that the return on financing for education through a stimulus package was almost 25% greater than other forms of spending. Investing in nurse training will yield a greater economic return.

Maintaining the House's level of support for nurse training would pave the way to fill thousands of job openings within the next 1-3 years and strengthen the healthcare workforce, which is necessary to improve access and quality while lowering costs.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. Our nation's patients will benefit most from this funding as more nurses will be available to provide high-quality, cost-effective care.

Respectfully,

American Academy of Nurse Practitioners  
American Academy of Nursing  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists  
American Association of Nurse Assessment Coordinators  
American Association of Nurse Executives  
American Association of Occupational Health Nurses  
American College of Nurse Practitioners  
American College of Nurse-Midwives  
American Nephrology Nurses' Association  
American Nurses Association  
American Organization of Nurse Executives  
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses  
Association for Radiologic & Imaging Nursing  
Association of Community Health Nursing Educators  
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses  
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses  
Association of State and Territorial Directors of Nursing  
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses  
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service  
Emergency Nurses Association  
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association  
Infusion Nurses Society  
National American Arab Nurses Association  
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists  
National Association of Neonatal Nurses  
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
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  
National Student Nurses' Association, Inc.  
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Registered Nurses First Assistants Policy & Advocacy Coalition  
Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates  
The Quad Council of Public Health Nursing Organizations  
Visiting Nurse Associations of America  
Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society

Cc:

Representative Nita Lowey

Representative Rosa DeLauro

Representative Jesse Jackson, Jr.

Representative Patrick Kennedy

Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard

Representative Barbara Lee

Representative Michael Honda

Representative Betty McCollum

Representative Tim Ryan

Representative James Moran

Representative Dennis Rehberg

Representative Rodney Alexander

Representative Jo Bonner

Representative Tom Cole