

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 4, 2014

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Moran:

As you begin work on the fiscal year (FY) 2015 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill, we urge you to provide \$280 million for the Title VII health professions programs at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). These programs support health care workforce development and education, train providers in interdisciplinary settings to respond to the needs of special and underserved populations, and increase minority representation in the health care workforce.

For five decades the Title VII programs have helped increase the supply of primary care professionals, expand access to care in rural and urban underserved areas, and develop a workforce that reflects the nation's diversity and the needs of patients. At a time when the country is facing health provider shortages, it is critical to demonstrate a strong commitment to the following programs:

- Area Health Education Centers (AHEC)
- Allied Health
- Centers of Excellence (COE)
- Faculty Loan Repayment
- Geriatrics
- Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP)
- Mental and Behavioral Health programs
- Oral Health Training
- Pediatric Subspecialty Loan Repayment
- Primary Care Medicine
- Public Health and Preventive Medicine
- Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students (SDS)
- Teaching Health Center (THC) Planning Grants
- Workforce Information and Analysis

In addition, support for health care workforce education and training programs helps guide students and aspiring professionals to high-demand careers. According to a January 2012 report by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the health care and social assistance industry is expected to be

the most rapidly growing sector in terms of employment through 2020. Title VII programs prepare individuals to fill these vacancies, helping to fulfill both individual career goals and community health needs.

Support for these programs will ensure that the distribution, quality, and diversity of the health professions workforce continue to improve, and that the workforce is prepared to meet the country's evolving and emerging health care needs. As such, we urge you to include \$280 million for these programs in FY 2015.

We greatly appreciate your leadership on this issue and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Jack Beel

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