



The ANA Seeks Investment in Nursing Workforce Development

Safe patient handling and staffing at the forefront.

The ANA is seeking an increase of \$25 million in fiscal year (FY) 2007 funding for the Nursing Workforce Development programs administered by the federal government. These programs, authorized by Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act, are the primary means of federal funding for nursing recruitment, education, and retention. If obtained, this \$25 million increase would bring FY 2007 funding for Title VIII to \$175 million.

The ANA maintains that this investment is the minimum amount needed to address the growing nursing shortage. The Department of Labor reported in the *Occupational Outlook Quarterly* (Winter 2005–2006) that America’s demand for RNs will grow 29% between 2004 and 2014. During this time period, 1.2 million RNs will be needed to accommodate growing patient needs and to replace retiring nurses.

Current funding levels fail to meet the need for nurses. In FY 2005, the federal government turned away 82% of the applicants for the Nurse Education Loan Repayment Program and 98% of the applicants for the Nursing Scholarship program because of a lack of funding. These much-needed programs are used to direct RNs into areas with the greatest need—including departments of public health, community health centers, home health agencies, nursing homes, and disproportionate-share hospitals.

The ANA is highlighting the fact that the nursing shortage is straining military health care delivery. The army, navy, and air force are offering new lucrative RN-recruitment packages that include large sign-on bonuses, generous

scholarships, and loan-forgiveness packages. Yet neither the army nor the air force has met its active service nurse recruitment goals since the 1990s. Last year, army leaders warned that they were experiencing a 30% shortage of certified registered nurse anesthetists. In 2004, the Navy Nurse Corps recruitment fell 32% below target.

President Bush released his FY 2007 budget proposal on February 6. This proposal, which outlines the administration’s priorities and begins the FY 2007 appropriations debate, contained no increase for Title VIII. In February the ANA and 13 national health associations sent a letter to the Congressional Budget Committees asking for a significant increase in funding for federal health care programs. The ANA then worked with the Congressional Nursing Caucus and senators Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) and Susan Collins (R-ME) to generate Congressional support for the \$25 million increase. The senators circulated a letter to their colleagues asking for support for the \$25 million increase. At the time of this writing, representatives Lois Capps, RN (D-CA), and Steven LaTourette (R-OH) were successful in garnering the support of more than 140 members of the House of Representatives. Senators Mikulski and Collins had secured the support of one-quarter of the Senate.

You can help the ANA in this effort. Contact your members of Congress and urge them to support a real investment in nursing. More information can be found at www.anapoliticalpower.org.

ANA SEEKING SUPPORT FOR MEDICAID APRN LEGISLATION

The ANA continues to seek Congressional support for the

Medicaid Advanced Practice Nurses and Physician Assistants Access Act (HR 2716, S 1515). This legislation would require fee-for-service Medicaid to cover the services of all advance practice registered nurses (APRNs). It also would require Medicaid to recognize NPs and certified nurse midwives as primary care case managers. In addition, it would require Medicaid managed care panels to enroll all NPs, certified nurse midwives, certified registered nurse anesthetists, and clinical nurse specialists.

The ANA has made the enactment of this legislation a priority because current law allows Medicaid to refuse to recognize many APRNs. This is particularly true of Medicaid primary care case management and Medicaid managed care.

Originally, the ANA had planned to attempt to include these bills in the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (PL 109-171). However, when it became clear that this bill included unacceptable cuts to current Medicaid benefits, the ANA changed its strategy and is now working to gather as many cosponsors for HR 2716–S 1515 as possible. The ANA will work for this bill to pass, either as a stand-alone bill or as an amendment to legislation to reauthorize the State Children’s Health Insurance Program. As of the time of this writing, the House bill had 35 cosponsors, and the Senate bill had two. You can help the ANA secure support for APRNs. Contact your members of Congress and urge them to support this legislation. More information can be found at www.anapoliticalpower.org. ▼

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