April 28, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

Thank you for your bipartisan work in passing H.R. 748, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. We are especially grateful that the bill included the reauthorization of the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs (S.1399).

For over five decades, the Title VIII programs have been helping to educate and retain our America’s nursing workforce. These programs bolster nursing education at all levels, from entry-level preparation through graduate study, and support academic institutions and the nurse faculty who prepare today’s nursing students to be tomorrow’s expert clinicians. Now, more than ever, it is imperative to invest in our nursing workforce. An investment in our nursing workforce today is a commitment to America’s health now and into the future.

As you begin work on the next COVID-19 relief bill, we strongly urge you to include the following priorities in further legislative packages to address this public health crisis:

**Invest in Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs.** Title VIII programs connect patients with nursing care across a variety of settings, including community health centers, hospitals, and schools of nursing. **We therefore request not less than $15 billion in supplemental funding to be allocated for all Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs, including at least $5 billion specifically for the Nurse Corps Loan Repayment and Scholarship programs, which shall remain available until expended.** Title VIII programs include Advanced Nursing Education program; Nursing Workforce Diversity program; Nurse Education, Practice, Quality, and Retention program; Nurse Faculty Loan program; and Nurse Corps Loan Repayment and Scholarship programs. This supplemental funding will ensure the nursing workforce remains strong and able to meet the current demands brought by this pandemic, as well as future nursing education and workforce demands as well.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and we look forward to working with you as we consider legislation to respond to the current public health crisis.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jeffrey A. Merkley  
Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator

/s/ Richard J. Durbin  
Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator

/s/ Kirsten Gillibrand  
Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator

/s/ Tammy Baldwin  
Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator