



U.S. CONGRESSWOMAN MAXINE WATERS

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Maxine Waters

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H.R. 3293, THE DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010

Washington, DC, Jul 24, 2009 - Rep. Maxine Waters [D-CA]: I rise to support this bill, which provides funding for essential health and education services for the well-being of the American people.

I commend the Appropriations Committee for providing \$263 million for Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs, a \$92 million increase in funding for these nurse education and training programs. Our nation is facing a severe shortage of nurses, and this shortage will only become more severe as we embark on health reform and provide more Americans access to affordable healthcare.

There are many young people in my district and throughout the country who would welcome the opportunity to pursue a career in nursing. Enabling promising young people to receive a college education in nursing will reduce unemployment rates in the short term and provide a long-term investment in our nation's healthcare system.

Over the last four years, funding for the Nursing Workforce Development programs has remained relatively flat. In fiscal year (FY) 2006, these programs received just under \$150 million and supported 91,189 nursing students. In the following year, these programs received the same amount of funding but supported only 71,729 nursing students. In FY 2008, the programs received \$156 million but still supported only 51,657 nursing students. These recent trends demonstrate the rising costs of nurse education and training, which results in the participation of fewer nursing students and, therefore, fewer new nurses. In FY 2009, the programs received \$171 million and, while this was a slight increase, it was still far below our nation's needs. A significant increase is necessary for these programs to overcome rising tuition costs and allow more students to participate.

The increase in this bill for nurse education and training programs will improve our nation's health system and allow thousands of young people to pursue a promising career field and serve their communities as nurses.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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