

February 28, 2022

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Republican Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressional Leaders:

As our country continues to grapple with both the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and a critical nursing and allied health professional workforce shortage, we write to share our strong support for the bipartisan, bicameral *Technical Reset to Advance the Instruction of Nurses (TRAIN) Act* (S. 1568/H.R. 4407), which would help support the future of our health care workforce by providing much-needed relief to hospital-based nursing schools and allied health professional programs across the country. We urge you to advance the TRAIN Act in the FY22 Omnibus to help limit any further disruption to the nursing and allied health workforce pipeline in the United States.

As you know, the ongoing shortage of nurses and allied health providers across the nation threatens to jeopardize care to millions of Americans. We cannot educate and train new nurses and other allied health caregivers fast enough. Medicare provides essential funding support to help train and educate our nation's health care workforce through direct graduate medical education (DGME) payments to approximately [120 hospital-based nursing schools](#) operated by a sponsoring hospital. Unfortunately, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) made an inadvertent error in 2010 in the administration of DGME payments that continued unchecked and unresolved for nearly a decade, which is now threatening our hospital-based schools of nursing and allied health programs with undue financial hardship.

Absent Congressional action, our hospital-based schools are required to pay back millions of dollars in funding we received up to a decade ago due to no fault of our own, and at a time when hospital finances and our affiliated nursing and allied health training programs are already severely strained. CMS has already begun the process to facilitate recouping money from our schools and our host hospitals. As a result, some of our nursing and allied health schools, which produce several thousand nurses each year, are now threatened with closure or major program reductions. As you are aware, nursing program closures would mean fewer nurses and jobs for teaching and administrative staff, and fewer educational opportunities for students, during a pandemic when nursing professionals are most needed.

The TRAIN Act would help correct for CMS's error by making a technical fix to section 541 of the 1999 *Balanced Budget Refinement Act* to adjust for the overpayments CMS mistakenly made to hospitals participating in the Medicare Advantage Nursing and Allied Health Professional

Education program between 2010 and 2018. The TRAIN Act would help protect hospital-based programs and nurse training programs from financial burdens during a global pandemic by holding these programs harmless from the consequences of an administrative mistake made by CMS over a decade ago.

We urge you to advance the TRAIN Act – which has strong, bipartisan support in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate in the FY22 Omnibus to provide much-needed relief to these programs.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent request.

Sincerely,