

Friends of the Health Resources and Services Administration

c/o American Public Health Association

www.friendsofhrsa.org

November 24, 2020

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Lowey, Chairman Shelby, Vice Chair Leahy and Ranking Member Granger:

As you work to finalize the FY 2021 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, the 113 undersigned members of Friends of HRSA and other supporting organizations urge you to support at least the House level of \$7.194 billion for the Health Resources and Services Administration's programs in any final FY 2021 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill and to oppose any efforts to reduce or eliminate funding for any of HRSA's critical programs.

We are grateful for the increases provided for HRSA programs in FY 2020, but HRSA's discretionary budget authority is far too low to effectively address the nation's current health care needs. Additional funding will allow HRSA to fill preventive and primary health care gaps and to build upon the achievements of HRSA's more than 90 programs and more than 3,000 grantees.

Friends of HRSA is a nonpartisan coalition of national organizations representing public health and health care professionals, academicians, and consumers invested in HRSA's mission to improve health and achieve health equity. The coalition advocates for strengthening funding levels for HRSA's discretionary budget authority to enable the agency to keep pace with the persistent and changing health demands of the nation's growing, aging and diversifying population and constantly evolving health care system.

HRSA is a national leader in improving the health of Americans by addressing the supply, distribution and diversity of health professionals, supporting training in contemporary practices and providing quality health services to the nation's most vulnerable populations. This includes people living with HIV/AIDS, pregnant women, mothers and their families, and those otherwise unable to access high quality health care. HRSA also oversees organ, bone marrow and cord blood donation, compensates individuals harmed by vaccination and maintains databases that protect against health care malpractice, waste, fraud and abuse.

Investing in programs that keep people healthy is important for the vitality of our nation. HRSA programs have been successful in improving the health of people at highest risk for poor health outcomes. The agency supports efforts that increase access to quality care, better leverage existing investments and achieve improved health outcomes at a lower cost. For example:

- HRSA supports over 11,000 community health centers which serve as the primary medical home to more than 28 million people, providing comprehensive, cost-effective care by reducing barriers such as cost, lack of insurance, distance, and language for their patients.
- HRSA supports the health workforce across the entire training continuum by strengthening the health workforce and connecting skilled professionals to communities in need.
- HRSA's Maternal and Child Health programs support patient-centered, evidence-based programs that optimize health, minimize disparities and improve health care access for medically and economically vulnerable women, infants and children.
- HRSA's Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program provides medical care and treatment services to over half a million people living with HIV. Ryan White programs effectively engage clients in comprehensive care and treatment, including increasing access to HIV medication, which has resulted in 87% of clients achieving viral suppression, compared to just 59% of all people living with HIV nationwide.
- HRSA supports healthcare systems programs that increase access and availability of lifesaving bone marrow, cord blood and donor organs for transplantation. Additionally, the Healthcare Systems Bureau supports poison control centers, which contribute to significantly decreasing a patient's length of stay in a hospital and save the federal government \$662.8 million each year in medical costs and lost productivity.
- HRSA supports community- and state-based solutions to improve rural community health by focusing on quality improvement, increasing health care access, coordination of care and integration of services that are uniquely designed to meet the needs of rural communities.
- The Title X Family Planning program reduces unintended pregnancy rates, limits transmission of sexually transmitted infections and increases early detection of breast and cervical cancer by ensuring access to family planning and related preventive health services to almost 3.1 million women, men and adolescents.
- HRSA also supports training, technical assistance and resource development to assist public health and health care professionals better serve individuals and communities impacted by intimate partner violence.

The nation faces a shortage of health professionals and a growing and aging population which will demand more health care. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the critical nature of a robust workforce in responding to public health emergencies. HRSA is well positioned to address these issues and to continue building on the agency's many successes, but a stronger commitment of resources is necessary to effectively do so. We urge you to consider HRSA's central role in strengthening the nation's health and support a funding level of at least \$7.194 billion for HRSA's discretionary budget authority in FY 2021.

Sincerely,

1,000 Days
 Allergy & Asthma Network
 American Academy of Family Physicians
 American Academy of Pediatrics
 American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases
 American Association for Dental Research
 American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
 American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy

American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine
American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Dental Education Association
American Liver Foundation
American Medical Student Association
American Medical Women's Association
American Optometric Association
American Organization for Nursing Leadership
American Physical Therapy Association
American Podiatric Medical Association
American Psychological Association
American Public Health Association
American Society for Clinical Pathology
American Society for Reproductive Medicine
American Society of Addiction Medicine
American Society of Transplantation
Association for Clinical and Translational Science
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of Departments of Family Medicine
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools
Association of Pathology Chairs
Association of Public Health Laboratories
Association of Schools Advancing Health Professions
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
CAEAR Coalition
Children's Hospital Association
Clinical Research Forum
Coalition for Clinical and Translational Science
Coalition of National Health Education Organizations
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc. (COA)
Connecticut Public Health Association
Dystonia Medical Research Foundation
Dystonia Advocacy Network
Emergency Nurses Association
Epilepsy Foundation
Eta Sigma Gamma
Family Voices
Futures Without Violence
GBS|CIDP Foundation International
Georgia Society for Public Health Education (GASOPHE)
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality

HealthHIV
Healthy Teen Network
HIV + Hepatitis Policy Institute
HIV Medicine Association
Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness
International Foundation for Gastrointestinal Disorders
Interstitial Cystitis Association
Lymphatic Education Research Network
Maine Public Health Association
March of Dimes
Massachusetts Public Health Association
METAvivor
NASTAD
National AHEC Organization
National Alopecia Areata Foundation
National Association of Community Health Centers
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Council for Diversity in the Health Professions
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National Healthy Start Association
National Institute for Children's Health Quality (NICHQ)
National Kidney Foundation
National League for Nursing
National Marrow Donor Program/Be The Match
National Network of Public Health Institutes
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium
National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health
National Pancreas Foundation
NephCure Kidney International
New York State Association of County Health Officials
North American Primary Care Research Group
Oncology Nursing Society
Patient Services, Inc.
Prevent Blindness
Prevent Blindness Georgia
Prevent Blindness North Carolina
Prevent Blindness Wisconsin
Prevent Blindness Ohio
Project Sleep
Pulmonary Hypertension Association
Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation
Ryan White Medical Providers Coalition
San Francisco AIDS Foundation
School-Based Health Alliance
Scleroderma Foundation
Sleep Research Society
Society for Public Health Education

Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine
The AIDS Institute
The Gerontological Society of America
The Marfan Foundation
US Hereditary Angioedema Association
Vermont Public Health Institute

Cc: House Appropriations Committee
Senate Appropriations Committee