July 25, 2006

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Bingaman:

The National League for Nursing (NLN) wishes to express its strong support for the Nurse Faculty Education Act of 2005 authorizing a demonstration project to increase the number of doctorally-prepared nurse faculty. We applaud your leadership in introducing this legislation.

Despite the passage of the Nurse Reinvestment Act in 2002, schools of nursing continue to suffer from a growing shortage of faculty, which prevents these institutions from admitting more students. Preliminary results from a report released by the NLN in December 2004 show that an estimated 125,000 applications were turned away from nursing programs at all levels for the academic year 2003-2004. The lack of qualified faculty to teach these students is the primary reason that their applications were not accepted.

The supply of appropriately prepared nurses and nursing faculty is inadequate to meet the needs of a diverse, aging population, and this shortfall will grow more serious over the next five years. As a result, the health of our nation will continue to be jeopardized as fewer nurses are available and able to provide the quality care we all need – and deserve – over the course of our lives. This legislation will help ensure that nurses exist in the future who are prepared and qualified to take care of you, your family, and all those in this country who will need our care.

The National League for Nursing champions the pursuit of quality nursing education. The NLN works to shape the future of nursing education with a membership comprising more than 1,200 nursing schools and health care agencies; and some 16,000 individual members including nurse faculty, leaders in nursing education, administrators, public members, and 20 constituent leagues. If we can be of any assistance to you in the passage of this legislation, please do not hesitate to contact us. Kathleen Ream, our Government Affairs Director, can be reached at 703-241-3974.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Ruth D. Corcoran, EdD, RN
Chief Executive Officer