

FY 2009 Budget Mimics FY 2008 Proposed Cuts

The Bush Administration's FY 2009 budget again seeks to decrease funding for nursing education. Similar to the cuts that Bush proposed for FY 2008, the FY 2009 budget only requests \$110 million – a \$46 million or 29.6 percent cut for Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs. The House and Senate proposed budget for FY 2008 that wended its way through Congress throughout 2007 recognized the indisputable connection between the persistent shortage of nurses and the severe shortage of nurse faculty. The bill included additional spending for nursing workforce development programs authorized by Title VIII only to be vetoed by President Bush when the Department of Health and Human Services FY 2008 appropriations first came to the president for signing.

Within Title VIII, the FY 2009 budget proposes eliminating all funding for Advanced Education Nursing. On the positive side, it also increases funding for the Nursing Education Loan Repayment and Scholarship Program – from \$30.5 million to \$43.7, an increase of 43.4 percent – and the Nursing Faculty Loan Program – from \$7.86 million in FY 2008 to \$9.31 in FY 2009, a 18.6 percent increase.

Advanced Education Nursing grants support the majority of programs that prepare graduate-level nurses for faculty positions and to

work as primary care providers. These grants help schools of nursing, academic health centers, and other nonprofit entities improve the education and practice of nurse practitioners, nurse-midwives, nurse anesthetists, nurse educators, nurse administrators, public health nurses, and clinical nurse specialists.

An increase in funding for Title VIII programs to a minimum \$200 million in FY 2009 – the amount being advocated by the NLN and the rest of the nursing community – would raise the federal investment in Title VIII's nursing education to an austere seven hundred-thousandths of the total federal budget. By contrast, in 1974 when the nation was addressing another nursing shortage, the federal investment was \$153.6 million in the Title VIII programs. Inflated and adjusted to today's dollars, this appropriation would equal \$634 million, four times the current FY 2008 budget.

The president's budget is pretty much dead in the water in the House and the Senate. However, because the chambers aren't veto-proof, it will be a very contentious year. How the jockeying for re-election will affect all this is up for grabs right now. In all likelihood, we will probably see a lame duck Congress dealing with a very huge omnibus budget bill in December.

Title VIII – Nursing Workforce Development Programs
(Amounts in Thousands)

Nursing Workforce Development Programs	FY 2005 Final	FY 2006 Final	FY 2007 Final	FY 2008 Final	FY 2009 Proposed Budget
Total	\$150,661	\$149,679	\$149,679	\$156,046	\$109,853
Advanced Education Nursing	58,160	57,061	57,061	61,875	- 0 -
Comprehensive Geriatric Education	3,450	3,392	3,392	3,333	3,392
Loan Repayment & Scholarships	31,482	31,055	31,055	30,512	43,744
Nurse Education, Practice & Retention Grants	36,468	37,291	37,291	36,640	37,291
Nursing Faculty Loan Program	4,831	4,773	4,773	7,860	9,319
Nursing Workforce Diversity	16,270	16,107	16,107	15,826	16,107

The NLN Joins With Nursing Community on Title VIII Reauthorization

The NLN, along with other members of the nursing community, recently worked together to draft a consensus document on priorities for the upcoming reauthorization of the Health Resources and Services Administration's Title VIII Nursing Workforce Programs. Representatives for Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) approached the nursing community last month and requested that it develop a set of agreed upon principles. Senator Mikulski plans to introduce legislation based on the nursing community's consensus document later this year.

In this issue . . .	
FY 2009 Budget Mimics FY 2008 Proposed Cuts	1
The NLN Joins With Nursing Community on Title VIII Reauthorization	2
From the States	3

From the States . . .

Iowa Task Force Addresses Nurse Shortage and Low Pay

In his Condition of the State address January 15, Iowa governor Chet Culver (D) noted the state's nurse shortage and low pay. Culver said, "It's time to get more nurses and to pay nurses better." He announced that lieutenant governor Patty Judge (D), a former nurse, would lead a task force focusing on the shortage.

On March 3, the Iowa Nursing Task Force issued a report offering recommendations for how Iowa can solve its nursing shortage. The report said the shortage can be solved in several ways, including boosting nursing pay, offering more scholarships for nursing education, and recruiting more nursing faculty to teach at colleges. The report also states that Iowa ranks 52nd in wages for registered nurses at a salary of about \$47,000 per year. In neighboring Illinois, which ranked 24th, the salary was nearly \$57,000 per year. Judge blamed the state's lagging federal health care reimbursement rates for much of the pay issue. She says Iowa ranks last in the nation for Medicare/Medicaid reimbursement.

PA Governor Announces \$1.8 Million Investment to Improve Nurse Education Grants

Governor Edward G. Rendell (D) announced the investment of \$1.8 million to expand nurse education opportunities and help increase the number of nurses in Pennsylvania. "We are faced with the serious challenge of finding skilled, qualified individuals to meet the health care needs of the commonwealth's aging population," Governor Rendell said. "By training more nurses – and by using state-of-the-art equipment for that training – Pennsylvania will have more graduates on the job who are qualified from day one to deliver the quality care our citizens need and deserve."

Twenty grant recipients will use \$679,933 to expand clinical education for nurses and \$1.1

million to purchase training equipment. Combined with at least \$2.1 million in private-sector matching funds, the total investment for these projects is approximately \$3.9 million.

Nurse Education Initiative Grants help to increase educational quality and enable institutions to expand their programs by providing faculty coordination and training services. The initiative also enables nursing programs to hire one faculty member who is dedicated to incorporating simulation technology into the curriculum, thereby providing the most productive and efficient use of simulation labs and increasing the number of students nursing programs can enroll.

Additionally, the grants help support partnerships between health care employers and nursing education programs to add faculty and increase student enrollment. They provide financial incentives to health care employers to lend qualified nurses as faculty to nursing programs that demonstrate a critical need for new faculty to expand their enrollment. These grants are part of a \$7.5 million fund in the state budget that is targeted at reducing the state's nursing shortage.

Governor Proposes Training Program to Combat Nurse Shortage

Washington governor Chris Gregoire (D) has proposed a \$3 million program for hospitals and community colleges to train current health care workers for nursing jobs. Gregoire met with the state Hospital Association, the Service Employees International Union, and others to outline her proposal, which has been sent to the Legislature.

The governor said that Washington has a nurse shortage, and that nurse assistants, surgical technicians, and other workers could be trained on the job and become RNs. She added that Shoreline Community College already has shown that the new training program works well, and that it is time to extend it statewide.