



Nursing Workforce Bill Comes Up Short for Faculty

Table with 6 columns: Nursing Workforce Development Programs, FY 2005 Final, President's FY 2006 Request, House Passed 6/24/05, Senate Passed 10/27/05, Conference Report*. Rows include Total (Amounts in Thousands), Advanced Education Nursing, Comprehensive Geriatric Education, Loan Repayment & Scholarships, Nurse Education, Practice & Retention Grants, Nursing Faculty Loan Program, and Nursing Workforce Diversity.

*Final Report has not yet been formally voted upon by the Senate

**\$8 million total for both programs

In a miraculous turn of events, the House today rejected by a vote of 209 to 224 the conference report on FY 2006 funding for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The Senate may begin debate today but more likely this will occur on Friday, November 18. The original agreement among the conferees cuts discretionary funding by \$450 million below the FY 2005 level. But the real figure is more like \$1.3 billion since the agreement includes additional Medicare administration costs that used to be paid for through mandatory spending. The result is a bill that comes up short in virtually every critical area of need. The situation will be made worse if, as predicted, Republicans later impose an across-the-board cut against all non-defense and homeland security programs.

For HHS, the report equates to the following:

- Cuts total health funding by \$376 million.
■ Slashes the Bureau of Health Professions budget in half, making it even harder to recruit qualified health professionals in many parts of the country.
■ Eliminates 10 vital health care programs, including trauma care, rural emergency medical services, and the health community access program. (Cont'd page 2)

In this issue . . .
NURSING WORKFORCE BILL COMES UP SHORT FOR FACULTY 1
FY 2006 NURSING PROGRAMS GUIDANCE MATERIALS AVAILABLE 2
DEADLINE LOOMS FOR NEW YORK NURSE FACULTY LOAN FORGIVENESS GRANTS 2

Nursing Workforce Bill Comes Up Short for Nursing Faculty (Cont'd)

- Would not allow a new community health center competition in fiscal year 2006.
- Provides the smallest percentage increase to NIH – less than 1 percent – since 1970.
- Does not include a Senate-passed measure to provide adequate funding to prepare for a flu pandemic.

In addition to the conference report cuts, on October 26, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) sent Congress a list of proposed rescissions from existing programs to offset the Katrina relief emergency spending. Included is a proposal to rescind the "Federal portion of the liquid assets of student loan revolving funds" at participating institutions. OMB has confirmed that its intent is to rescind the entire federal contribution to the revolving fund as of September 30. Since the federal contribution represents 8/9 of the total funding for these programs, this action would prevent in-

stitutions from awarding new loans in the 2006-2007 academic year, essentially freezing the programs for at least one year. Some additional information that we have been able to confirm:

- The federal portion will be determined June 30, 2006, and OMB estimates the returned funds to be \$100 million.
- If passed by Congress, the rescission will prevent institutions from making loans before the return of this federal portion.
- After June 30, the schools' revolving funds will consist only of student/graduate repayments.

The latest buzz is that Congress intends to roll this proposal into the next Katrina relief package, which will be attached to the defense appropriations bill.

FY 2006 Nursing Programs Guidance Materials Available

Application materials are now being released for Nursing Workforce Development Programs authorized under Title VIII. Program Guidance materials may be downloaded from the web at <http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/preview>. Interested parties are encouraged to check this website frequently for the additional FY 2006 Program Guidance releases.

Please note that the application deadline is identified in the guidance for each program. Applicants are advised by the Division of Nursing to carefully adhere to the submission guidelines and times stated in the guidance.

Deadline Looms for New York Nurse Faculty Loan Forgiveness Grants

January 1, 2006 is the deadline to apply for grants through New York's Nursing Faculty Loan Forgiveness Incentive Program. Awards are made annually to nursing faculty members or adjunct clinical faculty who are licensed registered nurses holding graduate degrees. Successful applicants must have outstanding balances for eligible student

loans to fund nursing programs that began on or after January 1, 2001.

The program is offered through New York's Higher Education Services Corp. For more information, go to www.hesc.com/bulletin.nsf/.