



Highlights of Selected Federal Legislation Impacting the Nursing Shortage

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Bill Number and Title	Major Features of Bill	Bill Status
H.R. ___/ S. ___: Fiscal Year 2009 Appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	<p>This annual spending bill sets the levels of actual spending for most of the major federal programs which provide support for the education and retention of nurses. This legislation is crucial in that unlike other bills which only <u>authorize spending</u>; this bill provides the <u>actual spending</u>. The President's budget plan calls for an increase of about \$1.5 million for the Faculty Loan program, but a cut of over \$46 million overall in nurse education and training programs for this fiscal year. This would be a reduction of 29.6 percent.</p>	<p><i>House and Senate Appropriations Committees are expected to pass their versions of this bill in June. Final action may be delayed until late 2008 or early 2009. A House subcommittee this week voted to increase Title VII and Title VIII funding by a total of \$69 million.</i></p>
H.R. ___/ S. ___: Reauthorization of Title VIII of the Public Health Services Act (PHSA)	<p>This section of the PHSA authorizes funding for the largest discretionary federal nursing education and workforce programs, including those aimed at producing more nursing faculty. The programs were last updated and renewed in 2002.</p>	<p><i>No legislation has been introduced but hearings may be held in the Senate which could lead to legislation.</i></p>
H.R.4137/ S.1642: Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965.	<p>The House version of this bill contains several provisions which seek to increase nursing education capacity. One (originally offered by Rep. Rush Holt (D-NJ)) would require the Institute of Medicine study constraints encountered by schools of nursing in admitting and graduating adequate numbers of registered nurses. Another would authorize grants to nursing schools to expand faculty and facilities and advance practice degrees for registered nurses. Grants would equal \$3,000 for every graduate over an above the average annual number graduated over the past 4 years. Another provision (originally proposed by Reps Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) and Steve LaTourette (R-OH) and Senators Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) would authorize up to \$10 million for up to 5 pilot projects which would provide scholarships to qualified nurses to pursue advanced degrees with the goal of becoming faculty members. It requires partnerships between nursing schools and hospitals and other health facilities.</p>	<p><i>The House passed its bill with these provisions. The Senate bill contains the pilot project but not the other provisions. A conference committee is expected to finish working out the differences between the two bills this summer. It is likely that some but not all of the nursing provisions will be retained.</i></p>

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H.R. 1585. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008	The Senate version of this bill contained an amendment sponsored by Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL) which would permit active duty nurses to serve two years in active service on the faculty of a nursing school. It would also encourage retiring military nurses to become nurse educators.	<i>While this provision was not included in the final 2008 law, its sponsor is exploring other possible ways to get it enacted into law.</i>
H.R. 772/S. 446. The Nurse Education, Expansion and Development (NEED) Act.	Provides capitation and formula grants to nursing schools for hiring and retaining faculty, increasing capacity through improved equipment, lab capacity, improving facilities and for the recruitment of students.	<i>Pending before the Senate HELP and the House Energy and Commerce Committees. 12 and 6 cosponsors, respectively.</i>
H.R. 2621. The Teacher and Nurse Support Act.	Expands loan forgiveness programs under the Higher Education Act to a maximum of \$17,500 over five years for nurses who agree to work full-time in a clinical setting or as faculty.	<i>Pending before the House Education and Labor Committee. 2 cosponsors.</i>
S.1628. The Nurse Faculty and Physical Therapist Act.	Provides grants to nursing schools to hire and retain faculty, create distance learning programs in rural areas, increase enrollment in and graduation from doctoral programs and assist recent graduates in becoming nurse faculty.	<i>Pending before the Senate HELP Committee. 6 cosponsors.</i>
S. 1604. Nursing Education and Quality of Health Care Act. .	Authorizes funding for demonstrations to expand the number of nurse faculty within schools of nursing, including by developing recruitment programs and offering scholarships. It also allows in the case of a nurse faculty shortage granting more than 10% of traineeships for advanced nursing education programs to individuals in doctoral degree programs. Another feature would award grants to collect data and study the potential benefits of basic and advanced nursing education levels or certification status in the efforts to promote quality improvement strategies and enhance patient outcomes and cost saving measures	<i>Pending before the Senate HELP Committee. 2 cosponsors</i>

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H.R. 4001/S. 2230. Nursing Education Opportunities Act.	Includes accelerated degree nursing students who pursue a second baccalaureate degree or a master's degree as an entry level nursing degree as eligible for financial assistance under existing programs and would raises the yearly loan amounts available to all nursing students. Among other features, the bill would authorize grants for the establishment of doctoral nursing degree programs with a priority given to states in which there are no such programs.	<i>Pending before the House Education and Labor and Energy and Commerce and Senate HELP Committees. 18 and 0 cosponsors, respectively.</i>
H.R. 2915. National Health Service Corps Scholarship and Loan Repayment Programs Reauthorization Act of 2007.	Authorizes an increase to \$300 million a year for the scholarships and loan repayments provided under this program which rewards health professionals, including nurse practitioners and nurse midwives for providing clinical services in a federally recognized shortage area	<i>Pending before the House Energy and Commerce Committee. 44 cosponsors.</i>



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