The Americans for Nursing Shortage Relief (ANSR) Alliance requests at least $210 Million in FY 2006 to fund the Nursing Workforce Development Programs – Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act – under the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). ANSR represents a diverse cross-section of healthcare and professional organizations, healthcare providers, and friends of nursing that have united to address the ever growing nursing shortage. The Alliance and the nation’s 2.7 million registered and advanced practice registered nurses (RNs and APRNs) believe Congress must implement a comprehensive set of initiatives to ensure that the nation has an adequate and well-qualified nursing workforce. The Consensus Document outlines the Alliance’s plan to deal effectively with the complex factors contributing to today’s nurse and nursing faculty shortages.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- **Expanding the Pipeline**
  Efforts to stem the nursing shortage must include an expansion of the student pipeline across the breadth of the profession. Students of basic nursing, advanced practice nursing, and nursing faculty are all critically necessary to sustain an adequate supply of registered nurses available to deliver quality health care.

- **Education and Advancement**
  Opportunities to pursue advanced nursing degrees and positions of autonomy and decision making are essential to moving the nursing profession forward and ensuring the retention of nurses in the healthcare workforce.

- **Quality Patient/Client Care**
  The delivery of quality healthcare by a sufficient number of registered nurses is the goal of the nursing profession. Developing solutions to the nursing shortage brings the nation an important step closer to ensuring that all Americans have access to high quality professional nursing care.

**IMPLEMENTING THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- **Improve Existing Programs**
  The nursing community, including basic and advanced nursing organizations, is united in its request for at least $210 Million in FY 2006 to fund current Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs to provide a minimum response to the needs being generated by the national nurse and nursing faculty shortages.

  - **Fully develop the National Nurse Corps**
    The National Nurse Corps provides registered nurses to the nation’s urban centers, rural areas, underserved communities, and regions that are experiencing shortages. All qualified health facilities – for-profit and non-profit, public and private – should be eligible to participate in this program. Mechanisms and incentives should be explored to allow National Nurse Corps recipients to easily enter into the Public Health Service Nurse Corps or other uniformed services. (Authorization included in the Nurse Reinvestment Act, P.L. 107-205.)

  - **Support Nursing Internship/Residency Programs – Section 831, Title VIII**
    These grants fund specialty and advanced practice internship/residency programs for post-degree recipients to meet the current and increasing demands for nurses with specialized training. The funds are available to for-profit and non-profit, public or private hospitals, academic institutions, and community-based healthcare settings to provide internship/residency programs for certain specialty-care and community settings, such as labor and delivery, emergency departments, operating rooms, home health care, nursing homes, public health departments, and community health centers. (Authorization included in the Nurse Reinvestment Act, P.L. 107-205.)
Increase funding for Title VIII Loan Repayment and Scholarship Programs – Section 846
With the passage of the Nurse Reinvestment Act in 2002, a national response occurred with significant numbers of people seeking these scholarships and loans. Many potential nurses and faculty are being turned away for lack of adequate funding of these programs. Section 846, Loan Repayment, was enhanced with the addition of scholarships. All qualified health facilities – for-profit and nonprofit, public and private – are eligible to participate in this program. (Authorization included in the Nurse Reinvestment Act, P.L. 107-205.)

Fully fund a fast-track nursing faculty scholarship and loan program – Section 846A, Title VIII
Nursing schools and programs are suffering from a continuing and growing shortage of faculty, which prevents these institutions from admitting many qualified students who are applying to their programs. To allow full-time study and rapid completion of doctoral studies, it is essential that scholarships, loans, and monthly stipends are made available to registered nurses and masters’ students. (Authorization for a faculty loan program included in the Nurse Reinvestment Act, P.L. 107-205.)

Fund new clinical career path enhancement within the profession – Section 811, Title VIII.
It is critical to enhance the participation of registered nurses in a variety of advanced practice nurse clinical career tracks. These tracks would include, but not be limited to, nurse practitioners, nurse midwives, clinical nurse specialists, and certified nurse anesthetists at the masters and doctoral levels. Preparation in these areas is often a precursor to entrance into faculty positions.

Bolster Minority Nurse Initiatives
To enhance the retention of minority nurses, additional funding needs to be provided. All qualified health facilities – for-profit and nonprofit, public and private – should be eligible to participate in this program. Although authority for scholarships and stipends for disadvantaged nursing students is authorized by Section 821 of Title VIII, due to current funding levels, only stipends have ever been awarded.

Reauthorize and fund the Nursing Student Loan (NSL) Program – Section 836, Title VIII
This program operates on a $2 million revolving account funded through loan repayments, and has not received new funding since the 1980s. All qualified health facilities – for-profit and nonprofit, public and private – should be eligible to participate in this program.

Create and Fund New Initiatives

Expand the Health Professions Education Partnerships Act of 1998 – Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act – to ensure an adequate, highly trained nurse workforce for the United States
A critical shortage of nursing faculty across the Nation is greatly limiting the ability of schools and universities to increase their enrollments in nursing programs. Sections 811 and 831 of Title VIII need to be expanded to include faculty development and mentoring in order to increase student enrollments.

Create a capitation grant program
Provide nursing programs with $1200 for each full-time nursing student enrolled. The programs would use these funds to hire faculty, pay for overhead, cover benefits, and pay salaries. Formulas should be developed to include nontraditional students seeking a second degree, and RN to BSN students.

Create tax incentives to increase the pipeline supply of nurses
(a) Employer-based
Employers should be encouraged to adopt policies to support non-RNs wishing to matriculate into an entry-level nursing program and for RNs seeking to attain a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) or advanced degree in clinical areas.

(b) Students
Tax credits for each year of school successfully completed should be provided to individuals who enroll in Associate Degree (AD), BSN, Masters or Doctoral education programs leading to a nursing faculty or practice area. Such credit would differ for the type of education level selected.
All scholarship and loan repayment monies provided to nursing students should be tax-exempt at any educational level.

- **Partnering with the Federal Government and the Community: Thinking Outside the Box**

  - **Department of Labor (DOL) Initiatives**
    Designate a national labor shortage in nursing and create initiatives centered at DOL to attract and retain people to the nursing profession. Such an effort would include, but not be limited to, providing funds for career-option education – including support for re-entry into nursing or second career transitional programs – and funds and assistance for career mobility.

  - **Department of Education Nursing Support**
    Amend the *Higher Education Act of 1965* to provide loan forgiveness and loan cancellation programs for nurses in exchange for working either in a clinical setting or at an accredited school of nursing.

  - **Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health**
    Develop a collaborative outreach model with nursing organizations (including specialty associations) and schools and universities to enhance minority recruitment and retention in the nursing field.

  - **Technology in the Patient Care Environment**
    Establish and fund grants through various federal agencies to support the development of information infrastructures that will enhance the clinical education of nurses.

  - **Community-Nurse Outreach Grants**
    Provide public-private partnership funding for grants that assist communities in designing innovative programs to recruit and retain nurses at all levels of preparation. All qualified health facilities – for-profit and nonprofit, public and private – should be eligible to participate in this program.

  - **Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Expansion Program**
    Enhance recruitment and retention of nurses, especially in rural settings, through expansion of statutory authority allowing AHECs to work with communities and schools of nursing to develop models of excellence for advanced practice nurses, school nurses, public health nurses, perinatal outreach nurses, and other community-based nurse providers. In addition, AHECs could expand their school-mentoring program to include a nurse-mentoring program with an emphasis on grades 6-12.

- **Nurse-Managed Health Centers (NMHC)**
  Expand Section 330 (e) (1) of the *Public Health Service Act* to allow nurse-managed health centers to become federally qualified health centers. NMHCs provide primary care to uninsured and underserved populations and should be allowed to have nursing students and faculty rotate through nursing centers allowing an excellent clinical experience for students and faculty.

- **Support and Expand Nursing Research**

  - **Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)**
    Develop an AHRQ research portfolio, in collaboration with professional nurse organizations, on nurse staffing mix, educational preparation, workplace conditions, leadership components in various settings to provide optimal care, and on community-based nurse providers and nurse-managed health centers.

  - **National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR)**
    Increase funding to support nurse research on the cost effectiveness of different nursing practices on patient outcomes. Such research would allow nursing practice to be refined and help ensure the provision of quality patient care particularly in a challenging environment.

  - **Health Resources and Services Administration**
    Expand the *Nurse Education Act* and collaborate with related HRSA departments, boards of nursing, related state agencies, and professional nursing organizations. Augment funding and expand legislative authority to ensure an increase in the timeliness and frequency of data collection on the nurse workforce to develop a better national nursing workforce model. Promote coordination with state and regional data collection workforce planning activities.
The undersigned organizations endorse the Consensus Document as a basis for public policy to ensure quality health care for the Nation through the provision of an adequate supply of nurses and nurse faculty.

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing
American Academy of Nurse Practitioners
American Association of Critical Care Nurses
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists
American Association of Occupational Health Nurses
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American College of Nurse Practitioners
American Nephrology Nurses Association
American Organization of Nurse Executives
American Radiological Nurses Association
American Society for Pain Management Nursing
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses
American Society of Plastic Surgical Nurses, Inc.
Association of Faculties of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
Association of State and Territorial Directors of Nursing
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Dermatology Nurses' Association
Developmental Disabilities Nurses Association
Emergency Nurses Association
Infusion Nurses Society
International Society of Nurses in Genetics
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
National Association of Neonatal Nurses
National Association Nurse Massage Therapists
National Association of Orthopaedic Nurses
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of School Nurses
National Black Nurses Association
National Conference of Gerontological Nurse Practitioners
National Council of State Boards of Nursing
National Gerontological Nursing Association
National League for Nursing
National Nursing Centers Consortium
National Nursing Staff Development Organization
National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties
National Student Nurses’ Association, Inc.
North American Transplant Coordinators Organization
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs
Oncology Nursing Society
Pediatric Endocrinology Nursing Society
Society for Vascular Nursing
Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates
Society of Otorhinolaryngology and Head-Neck Nurses
Society of Pediatric Nurses
Society of Trauma Nurses
Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates
Wound Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society

12/31/05