Congress of the United States
Washington, D.C. 20515

April 6, 2017

The Honorable Tom Cole, Chairman
Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you consider the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education appropriations bill, we urge you to provide adequate funding for programs designed to increase the number of health care workers prepared to care for the growing senior population and to support family caregivers in the essential role they play in this regard.

Today's health care workforce is inadequate to meet the special needs of older Americans, many of whom have multiple chronic conditions and cognitive impairments. It is estimated that an additional 3.5 million trained health care workers will be needed just to maintain the current level of access. Unless we expand training and educational opportunities, the workforce will be even more constrained in its ability to care for the growth in the older adult population as the baby boom generation ages. Reflecting this urgency, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has included strengthening the workforce, including those trained to care for older adults, as one of their top five strategic priorities.

Of equal importance is supporting the legions of family caregivers who provide millions of hours of uncompensated care that allow older adults to remain in their homes and communities. AARP estimated the economic value of family caregivers’ unpaid care was approximately $470 billion in 2013.

The number of Americans over age 65 is expected to reach 70 million by 2030. That is why Title VII and VIII geriatrics programs and Administration for Community Living (ACL) programs that support family caregivers are so critical to ensuring that there is a skilled eldercare workforce and knowledgeable, well-supported family caregivers available to meet their complex and unique needs. In addition, funding for research at the National Institute on Aging helps to evaluate training initiatives for the workforce that cares for older adults, including initiatives to enhance communication between families and members of the health care team.

We urge you to support a total of $51 million in funding for geriatrics programs in Title VII and VIII of the Public Health Service Act, $187.5 million in funding for programs administered by the Administration for Community Living that support the vital role of family caregivers in providing care for older adults, and $1.7
billion to support the research efforts of the National Institute on Aging. Specifically, we recommend the following levels:

**Title VII and VIII: Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program**

- **Title VII and VIII Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program**: This is the only federal program that aims to develop a health care workforce to maximize patient and family engagement while improving health outcomes for older adults. It equips the primary care workforce with the knowledge and skills to care for older adults and builds community networks to address gaps in health care for older adults through individual, system, community, and population level change. It also provides Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia education to families, caregivers, direct care workers, and health professions students, faculty, and providers. $51 million request.

**Administration for Community Living: Family Caregiver Support.**

- **Family Caregiver Support Services**: Provides a range of support services to family caregivers in states, including counseling, respite care, training, and assistance with locating services that assist family caregivers to care for their loved ones at home for as long as possible. $158.5 million request
- **Native American Caregiver Support**: Provides a range of services to Native American family caregivers, including information and outreach, access assistance, individual counseling, support groups and training, respite care and other supplemental services. $8 million request
- **Alzheimer’s Disease Support Services and Specialized Supportive Services**: One critical focus of these programs is to support the family caregivers who provide countless hours of unpaid care, thereby enabling their family members with dementia to continue living in the community. $15 million request
- **Lifespans Respite Care**: Funds grants to improve the quality and access to respite care for family caregivers of children or adults of any age with special needs. $5 million request

**National Institute on Aging.**

- **The National Institute on Aging**: Leads a broad scientific effort to understand and promote the health and well-being of older adults. $1.7 billion request

Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress

Theodore E. Deutch
Member of Congress
Letter to House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education
April 6, 2017
Page 4

Lois Frankel
Member of Congress

Filemon Vela
Member of Congress

A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress

Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress

Colleen Hanabusa
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Mark Takano
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Elijah Cummings
Member of Congress

G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress

Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress