



July 29, 2024

Senator Patty Murray
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

Senator Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

Senator Tammy Baldwin
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

Senator Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

Dear Senators Murray, Collins, Baldwin, and Capito:

We are writing to you on behalf of the Eldercare Workforce Alliance, the American Geriatrics Society, the National Association for Geriatric Education, and the Gerontological Society of America – organizations dedicated to improving the health and quality of life of older persons. As the appropriations process for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 moves forward, **we are reaching out with an urgent request regarding the Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP). Without additional funds, programs crucial to the care of at-risk older persons, including those with Alzheimer’s disease, will end this year in 20 communities.**

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) recently funded a new cohort of GWEPs that left 20 GWEPs from the previous cohort unfunded. HRSA needs at least an additional \$20 million in the geriatrics appropriation to keep these programs operating. As the Senate Appropriations Committee is scheduled to mark up the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill on August 1st, we strongly urge you to include these additional funds in the bill to keep these programs, which ensure access to a well-trained workforce and appropriate care for medically complex older persons, from ending.

The GWEP is the only federal program designed to increase the number of providers in a variety of disciplines with the skills and training to care for older persons. GWEPs have proven to be an effective and efficient solution to the severe shortage of geriatrics healthcare providers our nation is experiencing. The GWEPs educate and engage primary care physicians, nurses, social workers, the caregiving workforce, and other health care professionals, and focus on opportunities to improve the quality of care delivered to older persons, particularly in underserved and rural areas. Given the rapid growth of the older population, the need for training in geriatrics and gerontological expertise to help families, caregivers, and health practitioners support this increasingly diverse population is urgent. The only federal programs that focus on training the workforce to care for older Americans must keep pace with that growth. **The time is now to increase, not decrease, the number of educational and training opportunities in geriatrics and gerontology. Again, we urge you to include additional funding of at least \$20 million in the FY 2025 appropriations bill to ensure these vital programs can reach communities in every state and territory.**

Thank you, in advance, for your attention to our request. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me, Alanna Goldstein at agoldstein@americangeriatrics.org, or my colleagues (cc'ed on this email).

Sincerely,

Eldercare Workforce Alliance

American Geriatrics Society

National Association for Geriatric Education

The Gerontological Society of America