

August 13, 2007

The Honorable Janet Napolitano  
Chair, Executive Committee  
National Governors Association  
Hall of the States  
444 N. Capitol St., Suite 267  
Washington, D.C. 20001-1512

The Honorable Tim Pawlenty  
Vice Chair, Executive Committee  
National Governors Association  
Hall of the States  
444 N. Capitol St., Suite 267  
Washington, D.C. 20001-1512

Dear Governors Napolitano and Pawlenty:

The Tri-Council for Nursing, a long-standing alliance focused on leadership and excellence in the nursing profession, applauds the strategy that many governors are using to improve health care in their states by leveraging the role that nurses provide in building a cost-efficient and quality health care system. In particular, the Tri-Council applauds those governors who have directed financial resources toward addressing the nursing shortage by advancing nursing education and its infrastructure.

Research points to multiple, complex reasons for the nursing workforce shortage, which is accentuating health disparities and inflating health care costs. The problem of nurse faculty shortages in nursing education programs exists in every state. Often described as acute, this situation significantly contributes to the national nurse workforce shortfall. Strong evidence exists of a correlation between the shortage of nurse faculty and the inability of nursing education programs to keep pace with the demand for new registered nurses. A key priority in tackling this workforce deficit must include increasing capacity to accept qualified applicants to nursing education programs. Many states have realized that faculties are the engine of the pipeline and have developed innovative legislative strategies to help resolve the nursing shortage. Such initiatives include state funding to increase the availability of educational opportunities in nursing, loan repayment programs for nurses and nurse faculty, increases in the salaries of full-time nurse faculty, and targeted revenue funds to enable schools of nursing to expand student capacity. The Tri-Council believes more innovative programs, such as these, are needed throughout our country to address the nursing and nurse faculty shortage.

The Tri Council for Nursing understands that that there is no simple solution to address this issue. Accordingly, we would like to extend an invitation for you to meet with us to discuss further the development of a comprehensive set of state initiatives that would rapidly augment the nursing education infrastructure to meet the future demands for nursing care. Jo Ann Webb, Director for Federal Relations & Policy, at the American Organization of Nurse Executives will be happy to work with you to schedule this meeting. Jo Ann can be reached at 202-626-2321 or via e-mail at [jwebb@aha.org](mailto:jwebb@aha.org)

We look forward to working with you and, once again, the Tri-Council thanks the governors who have already embarked on the journey of supporting nursing education and nurse educators in their states. We encourage other governors to follow their example.

Sincerely yours,

Jeannette Lancaster, PhD, RN, FAAN  
President  
Geraldine Bednash, PhD, RN, FAAN  
Executive Director  
**American Association of Colleges of Nursing**

Rebecca M. Patton, MSN, RN, CNOR  
President  
Linda J. Stierle, MSN, RN, CNA, BC  
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Linda Q. Everett, PhD, RN, CNA, BC, FAAN  
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**National League for Nursing**