



June 29, 2005

The Honorable Bill Frist
Majority Leader
509 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

**Association of
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Jordan J. Cohen, M.D.
President

Dear Mr. Leader:

I write on behalf of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) to express grave concern over the elimination of the Title VII health professions programs (with the exception of \$12 million for the Centers of Excellence program and \$35 million for the Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students) in the FY 2006 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill (H.R. 3010) recently passed by the House. Elimination of these programs will threaten access to health care in our neediest communities by placing further stress on the national shortage of health professionals. The AAMC represents the nation's 125 accredited allopathic medical schools, 400 major teaching hospitals and health systems, and more than 109,000 faculty through 94 academic and scientific societies.

This proposed elimination comes at a time when 20 percent of the U.S. population resides in primary care Health Professions Shortage Areas and our population is growing older and more racially and ethnically diverse. Title VII programs train providers with the skills to care for special needs populations and are the only federal programs designed to increase minority representation in the health care workforce. While the House-passed bill provides funding to continue the expansion the nation's network of community-based health centers to meet the health care needs of the uninsured and underinsured, it eliminates the funds needed to train the health care workers who staff these clinics.

We understand that there are many competing priorities in the fiscal year 2006 bill; however, elimination of the Title VII health professions programs will halt development of a health care workforce designed to care for our nation's most vulnerable communities. I urge you to restore funding for the health professions programs in the FY 2006 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education bill.

Your support is greatly appreciated. We look forward to working with you to ensure the continuation of congressional support for these critical programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jordan J. Cohen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first and last names being the most prominent.

Jordan J. Cohen, M.D.