



May 14, 2020

Council on Social Work Education and National Association of Social Work testimony prepared for the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies; Testimony address the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray,

On behalf of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and the National Association of Social Work (NASW), thank you for your continued support of the social work profession and social work education. CSWE is a nonprofit national association representing over 800 accredited baccalaureate and master's degree social work programs, as well as individual social work educators, practitioners, and agencies dedicated to advancing quality social work education. NASW represents the social work profession, supporting the professional growth and development of its 120,000 members by creating and maintaining professional standards, and advancing sound social policies. We appreciate your efforts and leadership on issues that impact social work, social work education, and the wellbeing of individuals, families, and communities and social and economic justice.

We encourage you to consider the following appropriations requests that will support social work in the fiscal year (FY) 2021 appropriations process. Federal funding helps strengthen the pipeline of social workers, addresses the needs of vulnerable and at-risk populations, and supports students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Social worker practice in a diversity of fields including child advocacy, geriatrics, school social work, healthcare and other fields. As policymakers continue to focus on the social determinants of health, support for social workers, who are the workforce at the center of addressing these social factors, will be critical.

Our organizations strongly support efforts to boost critical funding at the Department of Health and Human Services for behavioral health initiatives, including the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and Health Resources and Services Administration programs.

Below are the funding CSWE and NASW request for critical programs in FY 2021. We respectfully ask for your support of these requests during the FY 2021 appropriations process.

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

- **\$790 million for the HRSA Title VII:** These programs improve access to and quality of care for vulnerable populations. Public health threats continue to impact patients across the country, such as substance use disorder epidemics. Titles VII programs are essential to addressing the health challenges of today and the future.
- **\$30 million for the Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Workforce Training Demonstration Program:** CSWE and NASW support funding for interprofessional training, including social workers, Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, and health service psychologists. It is vital that the

Demonstration supports the training of all eligible providers, including social workers, to ensure that mental and substance use disorder services in underserved community-based settings integrate primary care and mental and substance use disorders services.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

- **\$757.5 million for Community Mental Health Services Block Grant**
- **\$2.3 billion for Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant**
- **\$38.5 billion in emergency funding to organizations that primarily treat individuals with behavior health concerns and/or Substance Use Disorders and use evidence-based practices, with a significant portion of these emergency funds set aside for organizations enrolled in Medicaid as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic.**

Department of Education:

- **\$7,000 in FY 2021 for the maximum individual Pell Grant.** The Pell Grant Program is the foundation of financial aid for low-income students. Unfortunately, the purchasing power of the Pell Grant has continuously declined since the program's inception in the 1970s, shouldering students with a growing share of the cost of college.
- **Support for Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Programs.**

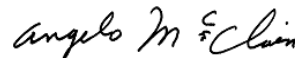
National Institutes of Health (NIH)

- **\$44.7 billion for the National Institutes of Health.**

Sincerely,



Darla Spence Coffey, PhD, MSW
President and Chief Executive Officer
Council on Social Work Education



Angelo McClain, PhD, LICSW
Chief Executive Officer
National Association of Social Workers