



HEAL Coalition ALERT: Appropriations Legislation & Budget Proposals Have Significant Impact on Allied Health

The Higher Education Allied Health (HEAL) Coalition works to analyze proposals by Congress and the executive branch for their effects on allied health students and institutions. As part of this ongoing effort, we have obtained a copy of President Bush's Fiscal Year 2008 budget request for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

The President's budget contains almost \$700 billion for HHS, but proposes significant cuts to allied health programs. If enacted by Congress, these proposed reductions in funding would decrease the availability of scholarships and loan repayment for health professionals, especially those willing to serve in underserved communities. With a drastic shortage of health care professionals looming on the horizon in the coming years, the HEAL Coalition believes that this is not the time to reduce funding for health professions, especially those in allied health.

In a related story, the 110th Congress recently passed legislation funding federal departments for the remainder of the current Fiscal Year. The legislation funds programs that could significantly assist allied health institutions and students: Loans, loan guarantees, and scholarships for the training and education of healthcare providers, along with grants and contracts to health care institutions.

While HHS continues to make grants available for allied health training programs, proprietary schools and their students may not be eligible to apply. The HEAL Coalition continues to advocate parity between proprietary and non-profit schools with regard to eligibility for grants provided under the Public Health Service Act.

If you wish to learn more about this issue, or are interested in joining the Coalition, please contact Executive Director Tom Netting at (202) 626-8553.