July 30, 2020

The American Academy of Nursing (Academy) serves the public and the nursing profession by advancing health policy and practice through the generation, synthesis and dissemination of nursing knowledge. It’s more than 2,800 fellows are nursing’s most accomplished leaders in education, practice, research, and policy.

On behalf of the Academy, I write in support of Congress allocating at least $6 million in funding for a longstanding and effective program that promotes the health and wellness of our nation’s military— the TriService Nursing Research Program (TSNRP)— in HR 6935, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for fiscal year 2021.

While the Academy acknowledges and is appreciative of Congress’ past support of the TSNRP, we are concerned that the funding halted this year. Established in 1992 by the late Senator Daniel K. Inouye, the TSNRP is the first and only program that supports military nurses conducting relevant military healthcare research. Throughout the last two decades, the program has supported critical studies that demonstrate timely outcomes with far reaching implications. For example, one of the earlier projects supported through the TSNRP funded research related to the effects of Agent Orange on women who served in the Vietnam War. This grant funding was awarded to the Honorable Linda Schwartz, DrPh, RN, FAAN, a Medically Retired Air Force Nurse at the time, who went on to tirelessly advocate for military and veterans as the Assistant Secretary of Veteran Affairs for Policy and Planning.

Active duty, reserve, and retired military nurses all benefit from TSNRP funding. Many times, their research goes beyond the scope of the military and helps to advance nursing research and healthcare for the general public as well. The *Battlefield Nursing and Disaster Pocket Guide (2nd Edition)* was published as a result of TSNRP and is a premier guide for battlefield military nurses and medics on the front lines. This resource is currently being updated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Another example of TSNRP research includes examining the effectiveness and optimal administration of life saving medications for military personnel who suffered severe blood loss from injury on the battlefield. This work and other studies supported by the TSNRP can truly save lives.
The Academy is thankful for the decades of Congressional support for the TSNRP and we are asking for it to be permanently funded by Congress to cement its status in law. The TSNRP should be a permanent fixture in the Department of Defense’s budget as the outcomes of its funded studies have a lasting impact on the health of our nation’s service men and women.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to supporting our military, nursing research, and veterans. If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact the Academy’s Senior Director of Policy, Christine Murphy, at cmurphy@aannet.org or 202-777-1174.

Sincerely,

Eileen Sullivan-Marx, PhD, RN, FAAN
President