



## NAHN Statement on the Department of Education's Implementation of H.R. 1, the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA)"

**December 2, 2025 (Lexington, KY)** - The National Association of Hispanic Nurses (NAHN) is committed to advancing the health and well-being of Hispanic communities and to leading, promoting, and advocating for educational, professional, and leadership opportunities for Hispanic nurses. Central to our legislative agenda is improving healthcare outcomes and expanding access to quality care for all communities. However, achieving these goals becomes difficult when significant obstacles limit nurses' opportunities to pursue and complete higher education. Ensuring accessible and affordable pathways to advanced nursing degrees is essential to building a diverse, culturally competent workforce capable of meeting the needs of the communities we proudly serve.

NAHN is deeply concerned by the Department of Education's decision to move forward with proposed definitions of "**professional degree programs**" under H.R. 1, the *One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA)* recently signed into law. Our concern relates specifically to **Title VIII, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, Subtitle B—Loan Limits, Section 81001**. As currently interpreted, the Department's implementation outlines a definition that explicitly **excludes nursing** from the list of programs considered "professional degrees." This exclusion denies nursing students access to the higher annual and aggregate federal student loan limits established by the Act.

Under OBBBA, students enrolled in programs defined as "professional degrees" under 34 CFR 668.2 are eligible for expanded borrowing authority. However, the existing regulatory definition—unchanged at the time of enactment—lists examples such as pharmacy (Pharm.D.), dentistry (D.D.S./D.M.D.), veterinary medicine (D.V.M.), chiropractic (D.C./D.C.M.), law (L.L.B./J.D.), medicine (M.D.), optometry (O.D.), osteopathic medicine (D.O.), podiatry (D.P.M.), and theology (M.Div./M.H.L.). **Nursing is not included**, despite the fact that advanced practice nursing degrees require graduate-level education, rigorous clinical preparation, and clinical and national certification.

This inconsistency in the Department's working definition of "professional degree programs" effectively excludes or inadequately recognizes advanced nursing degrees such as the **MSN, DNP, and PhD in Nursing**.

The consequences of this exclusion have immediate and serious implications for the nation's nursing workforce. According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), **approximately 173,114 advanced practice nursing students** were enrolled during the 2024–2025 academic year. Without access to appropriate loan limits, many of these students—future nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetists, nurse midwives, clinical nurse specialists, and other high-need providers—may face insurmountable financial barriers in completing their education.

At a time when the United States continues to grapple with persistent provider shortages and rising demand for primary and preventive care, policies that restrict educational access for future nurses undermine public health, threaten health equity, and destabilize the healthcare workforce, particularly in communities long underserved by the healthcare system.

**NAHN urges the Department of Education to immediately revise the regulatory definition of “professional degree programs” to explicitly include nursing and advanced practice nursing degrees.** We stand ready to collaborate with federal agencies, lawmakers, and partner organizations to ensure that nursing students receive appropriate and sufficient access to the resources necessary to complete their education and serve their communities with excellence.

**Nurses are essential to the health of this nation. Their education must be supported—not sidelined.**

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**About the National Association of Hispanic Nurses**

Since 1975, NAHN has been the nation's leading professional society for Latino nurses. With a growing membership of more than 40 local chapters, NAHN represents the voices of over 220,000 Latino nurses throughout the United States. NAHN is devoted to promoting safe, quality health care delivery to Latino communities and recognizing excellence among Latino nurses. To learn more, visit [www.nahnnet.org](http://www.nahnnet.org).

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