



March 5, 2020

Dear Legislator:

We write to respectfully urge you to **restore funding for the Center for Health Workforce Studies (CHWS) in the State Budget.**

For more than 10 years the Center for Health Workforce Studies (CHWS) at the University at Albany School of Public Health, has received an annual allocation under Aid to Localities in the New York State budget for the purpose of monitoring the state's health workforce. The SFY 2020-21 Executive Budget proposal eliminates several public health initiatives, among them, funding for CHWS, in the amount of \$148,000.

CHWS is a research center at the University at Albany School of Public Health. The mission of CHWS is to provide timely, accurate data and information, and conduct policy-relevant research about the health workforce to support and promote health workforce planning and workforce policy development at local, regional, state, and national levels.

There is an urgent need for workforce data and analysis that can help us better understand the supply and distribution of the state's health professionals as the State and localities work to respond to emerging public health threats, such as coronavirus/COVID-19; better understand the geographic distribution of the health workforce; address racial and gender inequities; and improve access to behavioral, primary, and other critical health care.

In past years, CHWS has used these funds to support staff engaged in state-focused health workforce research, including the annual NYS Resident Exit Survey which documents the outcomes of graduate medical training in the state, particularly the in-state retention of newly trained physicians; and the annual survey of Nursing Deans and Directors describing trends related to registered nurses (RNs) in the state as well as assessing the job market for newly trained RNs.

For 2020-21, CHWS plans to use these funds to implement re-registration surveys for all health professionals licensed by the State, the data from which would inform effective health workforce programs and policies, including:

- a better understanding of the availability of health professionals in planning responses to pandemics and other public health crises;
- a behavioral health workforce analysis to better identify key providers of these services and where unmet need is greatest; and
- an accurate assessment of the supply and distribution of active registered nurses in the state.

In an era of budget shortfalls and growing health expenditures, planners, policymakers, and legislators need accurate assessments and projections of workforce capabilities to support decision-making. Without this information, health care planning becomes more and more based on assumptions and anecdotes, and less on reliable information about the health care workforce.

Please address questions or comments to Kate Breslin, President & CEO, Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy, 518-463-1896 / kbreslin@scaany.org.