



Duckworth Helps Brown, Colleagues, Introduce Legislation To Protect Hospital-Based Nursing Schools From Funding Clawbacks

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– U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) joined U.S. Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Bob Menendez (D-NJ) and Rob Portman (R-OH) in introducing new bipartisan legislation during National Nurses Week to make a technical correction to a Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) program that supports the training of nurses and other allied health professionals at hospital-based nursing schools across the country. Due to a technical glitch in how CMS administered this program in the past, many hospital-based nursing schools are being put on notice that they may be required to send millions of dollars back to CMS. These notices could not come at a worse time, as hospitals and higher education institutions have faced significant financial challenges while managing the COVID-19 pandemic. The threat of recoupment could curtail their programs or cause schools to shut down entirely, limiting our nation’s nursing workforce capacity for the future.

“Even before—but especially during—this pandemic, our nation’s nurses risked their own lives to save others, redefining the word heroic with every patient they see.” said Duckworth. “With long hours and countless patients, the need for support of nursing instruction and training at hospital-based nursing schools has only increased, so I’m proud to help introduce the *TRAIN Act* alongside my colleagues to strengthen the pipeline of future healthcare workers.”

Nurses and other allied health professionals who are educated and receive their training at hospital-based programs provide high-quality care to communities across the country, including areas facing nursing shortages. The *Technical Reset to Advance the*

Instruction of Nurses (TRAIN) Act would ensure hospital-based nursing schools that received funding support from CMS in the past can keep those resources and put them toward training the next generation of nurses without the threat of recoupment. The *TRAIN Act* would protect hospital-based nursing schools and other allied health programs across the country from potential claw backs by prohibiting CMS from recouping past payments and overpayments when CMS failed to make technical annual updates to the program.

In September 2020, 118 of the impacted nursing schools – including five from Illinois – penned a [letter](#) to then Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Azar requesting he take administrative action to fix this technical error in the past administration of this program.

In December 2020, Duckworth led a [letter](#) to then-U.S. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and then-U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), requesting that any future legislative package, including FY 2021 appropriations, healthcare extenders or COVID-19 emergency relief, ensures that our nation's 120 hospital-based nursing schools don't face potentially devastating cuts during a deadly pandemic.