



# FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF NURSE PRACTITIONERS

ADVOCACY THROUGH ACTION

The Florida Association of Nurse Practitioners (FLANP)—representing more than 40,000 licensed and student nurse practitioners across Florida—issues this formal position statement in response to the U.S. Department of Education’s (USDOE) proposed definition of “professional degree programs” under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) negotiated rulemaking process. As written, the proposed definition excludes graduate nursing programs—including Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), and Advance Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) educational tracks—from recognition as “professional degrees.” This exclusion contradicts federal and state accreditation frameworks and healthcare workforce needs.

Graduate nursing programs including Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA), Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM), Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS), and Nurse Practitioner (NP) tracks meet rigorous professional accreditation standards and prepare clinicians for independent practice. These programs are essential to primary care delivery, rural access, and the national healthcare workforce.

## POSITION of FLANP

### ***1. Graduate Nursing Degrees ARE Professional Degree.***

APRNs are independent licensed practitioners, and their education programs clearly meet the definition of professional preparation.

### ***2. The Proposed Definition Harms Workforce Development.***

Restrictions may jeopardize financial aid, accreditation, and national efforts to expand primary care access.

### ***3. The Rule Disregards Accreditation and Licensure Frameworks.***

The proposal conflicts with state licensure, national accreditation, and federal healthcare systems.

### ***4. The Proposed Definition Creates Disparate Treatment.***

It elevates other healthcare professions while excluding graduate nursing programs without justification.

FLANP formally opposes the USDOE’s proposed definition and urges inclusion of MSN, DNP, and all APRN tracks within the “professional degree program” category.

## RECOMMENDATION

Respectfully, FLANP calls for immediate revision of the proposed rule and reaffirms its commitment to advancing and protecting the nurse practitioner profession.

## ***THE FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF NURSE PRACTITIONERS (FLANP)***

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