



NATIONAL AHEC WEEK ACTION ALERT

MARCH 24-28, 2025

URGE YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO SUPPORT AHEC FUNDING!
Urge your U. S. House Representative and two Senators to support federal funding for the AHEC Program!

Background

Passed just on Friday, March 14th, we are currently operating under a continuing resolution (CR) that has kept the government funded at fiscal year (FY) 2024 programmatic funding levels until September 30th (end of fiscal year date) of this year. Because this CR lasts until the end of the 2025 fiscal year, we are shifting focus to the FY 2026 appropriations process. During National AHEC Week, March 24th to 28th, it is important that we make it clear to Congress the importance of funding key health workforce programs, such as the Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program in FY 2026.

FY 2024 and the House and Senate FY 2025 funding proposals included level funding of \$47 million for the AHEC program. For FY 2026, we will be making the recommendation of \$67 million for the AHEC program (same as previous years), which corresponds to the funding required in the statutory language for the AHEC program. **Given the recent Executive Orders and review of federal programs by the new Administration, it is more important than ever to reach out to your legislators and make them aware of the importance of continued bipartisan support for the AHEC program through Congress and the annual appropriations process.** We must make clear to legislators that the AHEC program addresses health care challenges and shortages in some of the hardest to reach communities, particularly rural communities, and it will be those communities that will experience negative impacts if any funding for the program is cut or eliminated.

Reach out to your House Representative and two Senators to urge them to support \$67 million for the AHEC Program in FY 2026, and for their general support of the program throughout the 119th Congress!

See next page for how to take action.

<u>AHEC Program</u>	
Included in FY25 House LHHS Report	\$47 million (level with FY 2024)
Included in FY25 Senate LHHS Report	\$47 million (level with FY 2024)
Included in the Full-Year CR for FY 2025 (FY 2024 Funding level)	\$47 million
NAO Recommendation for FY 2026	\$67 million**

**This funding level aligns with the authorizing language requiring each AHEC to be provided with \$250,000 per year.

Take Action

If you are unsure of who to contact, please follow the steps below.

- Identify your Representative in the House and your two Senators in the Senate. You may find your House Representative [here](#) and your Senators [here](#).
- Once you have identified your members, navigate to their congressional website to locate their Washington, DC office phone number. (This is normally located at the bottom of their official congressional page.)
- With the office number in hand, call the appropriate office and ask to speak with the Health Appropriations Staffer. If that person is not available, ask to leave a voice mail and ask for the staffer's email address.
- If you are having trouble getting in touch with an office, feel free to reach out to NAO's Washington Representatives at the Health and Medicine Counsel (contact: Kira Flaherty, flaherty@hmcw.org). HMC can assist in providing staffers' contact information.

Suggested Advocacy Talking Points/Email Message

As you contact offices, use the template below as a reference to speak with a health staffer or if you would like to leave a voicemail/email.

Hello/Dear **[Health Staffer's Name]**,

My name is **[Your Name]** and I am a constituent of **[Your Representative's/Senator's Name]** from **[Your Current/Hometown]**. As Congress begins work on the Fiscal Year 2026 appropriations bills, please support the HRSA Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) program at a funding level of **\$67.00 million for FY 2026, or the largest possible increase. We appreciate and thank the House and Senate for proposing level funding of \$47 million for the AHEC program for FY 2024 and in the FY 2025 House and Senate proposals. It is critically important there is continued support for the AHEC program for our centers to continue to respond to health care shortages and challenges, particularly in rural and disadvantaged communities.**

[Briefly explain your role with AHEC and how your AHEC program supports community-based health professions training, placements, and rotations. Go into detail on how your office/center responds to public health emergencies, addresses health workforce challenges, places learners in rural and hard to reach areas, and carries out initiatives like the AHEC Scholars program. Leave your contact information with the office and establish yourself as a resource.]

Engagement Tip

There are several freshman members of Congress, as well as new Health Staffers in several congressional offices. When communicating directly with the Health Staffer in the office, it is likely helpful to ask them how familiar they are with the AHEC program to gauge how much detail you should provide.

Final Step

Please share any feedback you get from your congressional offices! Feedback can be sent to NAO's Public Policy Committee (Courtney Combs at courtney.combs@utoledo.edu and Dwain Harris at dwharris@nationalahec.org). This feedback will then be compiled and sent to Philip Goglas II and Kira Flaherty from the Health and Medicine Counsel where they can follow up with the offices based on responses.

Thank you,
NAO Public Policy Committee, National AHEC Organization