



July XX, 2013

The Honorable Greg Walden
U.S. House of Representatives
2182 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Walden:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing the Nursing Community, we would like to thank you for introducing the *Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act of 2013* (H.R. 2504). Collectively, the Nursing Community represents nearly one million Registered Nurses, Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), nurse executives, nursing students, nursing faculty, and nurse researchers. Our organizations are committed to improving the health and health care of our nation by collaborating to support the education and practice of APRNs, and therefore fully support H.R. 2504.

APRNs provide cost effective, high-quality care and their independent practice, in numerous healthcare settings, has been recognized by Medicare for nearly 20 years. Home health, in particular, is one area where APRNs are relied upon for their expert clinical skills. This is especially true in parts of the country where access to physicians is limited. Yet, Medicare law prohibits APRNs from certifying Medicare patients for the home health benefits and signing home health plans of care.

The *Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act of 2013* would specifically allow nurse practitioners, certified nurse-midwives, and clinical nurse specialists to certify home health services. This bill clearly recognizes the critical contributions that APRNs make to the delivery of health care in the United States and the need for these clinicians to practice to their full legal scope.

Again, we commend the efforts of this legislation to ensure that America's patients receive the home health services they need. If the Nursing Community can be of any assistance to you or your staff, please do not hesitate to contact its convener Suzanne Miyamoto at smiyamoto@aacn.nche.edu or 202-463-6930.

Sincerely,