



May 5, 2023

The Honorable Representative Jennifer Kiggans
United States House of Representatives
1037 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Kiggans,

Thank you for introducing the Improving Care and Access to Nurses (I CAN) Act alongside your colleagues. As you stated, “this piece of legislation would increase healthcare access, improve quality of care, and lower costs by removing the remaining barriers imposed by the federal government in the Medicare and Medicaid programs that prevent Advance Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) from practicing the full scope of their education and clinical training”.

As a gerontological nurse practitioner (NP) and certified gerontological specialist caring for older adults living in long term care (LTC) facilities, I wholeheartedly support this legislation. Gerontological APRNs have practiced in LTC settings for nearly four decades, with notable growth in the number of APRNs, who now represent 60 percent of full-time primary care providers in LTC (Goodwin et al., 2021). In addition, the number of LTC residents with a physician as the primary care provider (PCP) has decreased from 82.9% in 2008 to 59.1% in 2018 (Goodwin et al., 2021). Nurse practitioners, many of whom practice autonomously, have filled this primary care gap by completing “complex visits” at the time of admission and conducting regular, episodic, and follow-up visits. Despite the evidence that NPs provide safe, high quality, cost-effective care, their practice is still restricted due to federal regulations. These regulations have not been revised since they were put into place in 1997, regardless of the expanding role of NPs in LTC.

Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association (GAPNA) is the premier professional organization that represents the interests of advanced practice nurses, other clinicians, educators, and researchers involved in the practice or advancement of caring for older adults. As President of GAPNA, I lead a coalition of key stakeholders focused on improving care for residents in LTC settings. The coalition supports legislation that improves access to high quality healthcare for the older adult population. Attached to this letter is a position statement GAPNA leaders published in 2022 that provides additional data in support of removing federal APRN barriers to practice. In addition, I have asked GAPNA members to reach out to their Representatives requesting their support of H.R. 2713 and will continue these efforts.

I welcome the opportunity to continue this conversation and explore future advocacy opportunities. In the meantime, if I can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Kim", is positioned above the typed name.

Jennifer Kim, DNP, GNP-BC, GS-C, FNAP, FAANP
President, GAPNA

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