



February 5, 2014

United States House of Representatives

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the 53 undersigned organizations representing the Nursing Community, we respectfully request that you refrain from signing a Dear Colleague letter being circulated by Representatives Michael Grimm (R-NY) and Ann Kirkpatrick (D-AZ), which expresses concerns with a proposed modification to the Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) Nursing Handbook. This change would allow Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) full practice authority within the VHA system. Collectively, the Nursing Community represents nearly one million Registered Nurses, APRNs, nurse executives, nursing students, nursing faculty, and nurse researchers. Our organizations collaborate to advance sound policy decisions that promote improvements to our nation's healthcare system.

We commend the VHA's proposed recognition of APRNs (including nurse practitioners, certified nurse-midwives, certified registered nurse anesthetists, and clinical nurse specialists) as full practice providers in the VHA's Nursing Handbook. We believe this will further facilitate timely delivery of high-quality health care to our nation's Service men and women. APRNs are educated to provide evidence-based care to specific patient populations and are qualified to diagnose and treat a variety of conditions. In addition, APRNs are required to pass rigorous national certification examination to demonstrate their knowledge and competency.

Recognizing APRNs as full practice providers would allow the VHA to maximize the utilization of advanced practice providers by alleviating unnecessary physician oversight, thus increasing access to care for our Veterans and military populations. This is consistent with recommendations outlined in the Institute of Medicine's 2010 report the *Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, which includes the recommendation that "Advanced practice registered nurses should be able to practice to the full extent of their education and training."

Yet, Reps. Grimm's and Kirkpatrick's letter does not support this effort, and therefore we urge you to not sign it. If our organizations can be of any assistance, or if you have any questions, please contact the convener of the Nursing Community Dr. Suzanne Miyamoto, at [Smiyamoto@aacn.nche.edu](mailto:Smiyamoto@aacn.nche.edu) or 202-463-6930, ext. 247.

Sincerely,

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses  
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing

American Academy of Nursing  
American Assembly for Men in Nursing  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses  
American Association of Neuroscience Nurses  
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists  
American Association of Nurse Assessment Coordination  
American Association of Nurse Practitioners  
American College of Nurse-Midwives  
American Nephrology Nurses' Association  
American Nurses Association  
American Organization of Nurse Executives  
American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association  
American Psychiatric Nurses Association  
American Society for Pain Management Nursing  
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses  
Association of Community Health Nursing Educators  
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care  
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses  
Association of Public Health Nurses  
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses  
Association of Veterans Affairs Nurse Anesthetists  
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses  
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service  
Dermatology Nurses' Association  
Developmental Disabilities Nurses Association  
Emergency Nurses Association  
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association  
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association  
Infusion Nurses Society  
International Association of Forensic Nurses  
International Nurses Society on Addictions  
International Society of Psychiatric Nurses  
National American Arab Nurses Association  
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists  
National Association of Hispanic Nurses  
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Association of School Nurses  
National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers  
National Gerontological Nursing Association  
National Nursing Centers Consortium  
National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing  
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties  
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs  
Oncology Nursing Society

Pediatric Endocrinology Nursing Society  
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association  
Public Health Nursing Section, American Public Health Association  
Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates  
The Quad Council of Public Health Nursing Organizations