



August XX, 2013

Dear ____:

On behalf of the XX undersigned organizations representing the Nursing Community, we write to express our concern regarding the National Nurse Act of 2013 (H.R. 485). The Nursing Community is a forum comprised of national professional nursing associations that builds consensus and advocates on a wide spectrum of healthcare and nursing issues. Collectively, the Nursing Community represents nearly one million registered nurses, advanced practice registered nurses, nurse executives, and nursing students, faculty, and researchers.

Our organizations have been aware of the National Nurse initiative since its inception and have expressed concern over its multiple iterations. The Nursing Community last sent a letter in 2010 to members of Congress sharing our collective reservations. We have reviewed H.R. 485 and we believe that:

- The bill would propose a title that breaks parity with the titles and responsibilities of the other Chief Officers within the United States Public Health Service (USPHS). A name change would cause confusion among the public and federal agencies, and may potentially jeopardize the well-established Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) of the USPHS position.
- The bill proposes the creation of new programs that are redundant with existing public health entities and systems (such as the CNO of the USPHS, Public Health Nursing, the Medical Reserve Corps, the agencies of Health and Human Services and other non-government entities).
- The bill creates new initiatives at a time when there are limited resources to fund existing programs, particularly given the current fiscal climate. Investments would best serve America's patients in already established federal programs that support the public health workforce and infrastructure.

In addition, Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) and retired Chief Nursing Officers (CNOs) of the USPHS have recently sent letters in opposition to the bill. The American Nurses Association did express opposition to the sponsor of the bill.

Our organizations do however, support elevating the rank of the CNO of the USPHS to the Rear Admiral/08 rank. This elevation in rank would place the CNO on par with other uniformed service Nurse Corps Directors, and we believe this would serve as an effective approach to raising awareness and promoting the CNO of the USPHS.

Public health nursing is instrumental in supporting the health of our nation. While we applaud the goal of promoting public health nursing, we believe there are systems in place to address the provisions proposed in H.R. 485. If we can be of any assistance or answer additional questions, please contact Lauren Inouye at Linouye@aacn.nche.edu or 202-463-6930, ext. 271.

Sincerely,