



## **Testimony of the Nursing Community Regarding**

### **U.S. Government Response: Fighting Ebola and Protecting America**

#### **U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations**

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The statement below was developed by the Nursing Community coalition and released on October 24, 2014. It demonstrates the full commitment from national nursing organizations, representing the wide spectrum of care delivery, to engage with all healthcare stakeholders as the nation responds to the Ebola Virus Disease locally and globally. It is submitted for the record to reinforce the critical role that nurses play in deploying best practices, educating patients and communities, all to minimize the risk of the Ebola Virus Disease and other emerging diseases in the United States and around the world. The undersigned organizations appreciate the dedication of Chairwoman Barbara Mikulski, Ranking Member Richard Shelby and all members of the Senate Appropriations Committee to finding solutions and for calling this hearing that will discuss the government's response to Ebola.

#### *The Nursing Community Stands United for Swift and Coordinated Action to Protect the Public and Health Providers against the Ebola Virus Disease*

As a coalition of 61 national nursing organizations, the Nursing Community stands united that the focus on responding to the Ebola Virus Disease in the United States and the devastating outbreak in West Africa must be on patient health and community protection. The undersigned organizations are dedicated to supporting the profession, over 3 million licensed registered nurses, in their frontline work to provide direct care and education to patients and the public regarding the Ebola Virus Disease. As nurses, our first and foremost responsibility is to ensure that we fulfill our professional standards of high-quality, compassionate care to any patient in need. The cornerstone of that care is safety for both the patient and the healthcare provider. Nurses must have the resources, evidence-based protocols and procedures, and the direct communication channels necessary to meet challenges like the one our nation is facing so that healthcare outcomes are not compromised.

The response of the healthcare community to the Ebola Virus Disease has consistently concentrated on collaboration and communication. Among our coalition members, we are sharing resources, statements, and educational information that links directly with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in a coordinated effort. Earlier this week, the CDC released its personal protective equipment (PPE) guidance, and these have been shared broadly among our memberships who represent nurses in all aspects of care. Additionally, our outreach is interprofessional and encompasses a broad range of

healthcare delivery stakeholders. The response to the Ebola Virus Disease is a multidisciplinary team approach. Providers, healthcare facilities, state officials, public health departments, and the federal government are unified in their support for a common goal: Ensure that the virus is contained and reinforce any measure necessary to protect the public's health now and into the future.

Today, as in every day throughout history, nurses are at the patient's side, delivering care tailored to each patient's unique and most personal needs. Registered nurses, specialty-credentialed, and advanced practice registered nurses are key to leading the real-time implementation of the evidence and analyzing outcome information to improve patient care and maximize the effectiveness of the healthcare team. As experts in communicable disease prevention and control strategies, public health nurses are well positioned to collaborate with other healthcare providers to share their knowledge and skills to manage the spread of diseases in communities nationwide.

Nurses are trusted leaders of the healthcare team who meet our patients where they live and where they seek healthcare. This includes our nurse colleagues in West Africa, who have demonstrated tremendous bravery and commitment to their patients in the face of overwhelming challenges. In Africa, nurses continue to care for patients without protective equipment and tragically have the highest mortality among all healthcare providers fighting Ebola. It is critical that collective efforts are directed to the national and global response. Nursing's role could not be more important as we continue to deploy best practices, educate patients and communities, all to minimize the risk of the Ebola Virus Disease and other emerging diseases in the United States and around the world.

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 Heart Failure Nurses  
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses  
American Association of Neuroscience Nurses  
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists  
American Association of Nurse Practitioners  
American Association of Occupational Health Nurses  
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 for Radiologic and Imaging Nursing  
Association of Community Health Nursing Educators  
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care  
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses  
Association of Public Health Nurses  
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  
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association  
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association  
Infusion Nurses Society  
International Association of Forensic Nurses  
International Society of Nurses in Genetics  
International Society of Psychiatric Nursing  
National American Arab Nurses Association  
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists  
National Association of Hispanic Nurses  
National Association of Neonatal Nurses  
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Association of School Nurses  
National Council of State Boards of Nursing  
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  
Public Health Nursing Section, American Public Health Association  
The Quad Council of Public Health Nursing Organizations  
Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society