

March 4, 2015

The Honorable Sam Graves  
1415 Longworth House Office Building  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky  
2367 Rayburn House Office Building  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Graves and Schakowsky:

On behalf of the 40 undersigned organizations, we are pleased to express our support for the “Improving Veterans Access to Quality Care Act of 2015” and to urge its enactment.

We support the “Improving Veterans Access to Quality Care Act” because it recognizes all Veterans Health Administration APRNs as full practice providers and provides a common-sense solution to the challenges associated with ensuring America’s Veterans have access to the high-quality healthcare they need and deserve. By recognizing Nurse Practitioners, Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists, Clinical Nurse Specialists, and Certified Nurse-Midwives to their full practice authority, the VHA can make optimal use of these critical members of the healthcare workforce across the entire care continuum. Many of the APRNs practicing in the VHA are also Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces, providing them with a unique clinical perspective. By allowing all APRNs to practice as full practice providers, the VHA can maximize care delivery and minimize waits and delays for critical services. The bill is also consistent with the recommendations of the Institute of Medicine report *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, the National Council of State Boards of Nursing *APRN Consensus Model*, and with proposals under consideration in the VHA.

Most importantly for our Veterans, VHA recognition of APRN full practice authority would make VHA healthcare delivery consistent with the models already practiced by our U.S. Armed Forces, Indian Health Service and Public Health Service systems. In these federal health systems, our Veterans can already use their VHA health benefits thanks to the Veterans Access Choice and Accountability Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-146). We also applaud your efforts to extend and expand the “Intermediate Care Technician” pilot program, which enables the immediate transition of combat medics, medical technicians and corpsman straight from the U.S. Armed Forces into the VHA system to provide care and advance their education and training.

In the interest of the Veterans for whom thousands of our members provide care within our VHA system, we thank you for introducing this legislation and look forward to help enact it into law. Our members provide invaluable care within the VHA system for thousands of Veterans; this legislation will ensure the most efficient and effective use of these healthcare professionals so Veterans receive timely access to the high quality care they deserve. Please direct any questions to Frank Purcell, American Association of Nurse Anesthetists Senior Director Federal Government Affairs, at [fpurcell@aanadc.com](mailto:fpurcell@aanadc.com), 202-741-9080.

Sincerely,

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses  
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 Nurse Anesthetists  
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 Society for Pain Management Nursing  
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses  
Association for Radiologic and Imaging Nursing  
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  
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc.  
Emergency Nurses Association  
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association  
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association  
Infusion Nurses Society  
International Association of Forensic Nurses  
International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses  
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists  
National Association of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners  
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 Nursing Centers Consortium  
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties  
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Organization for Associate Degree Nursing  
Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates