March 18, 2015

Mary Wakefield, PhD, RN, FAAN  
Acting Deputy Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Dr. Wakefield,

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), we would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Acting Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. As the national voice for baccalaureate and graduate nursing education, AACN represents over 760 schools of nursing that educate more than 450,000 students and employ approximately 17,000 faculty members. These institutions are responsible for educating half of our nation’s registered nurses and all of our advanced practice registered nurses, nurse faculty, and nurse researchers.

Throughout your career you have been a visionary leader committed to improving America’s health and wellness by increasing access to health care for millions of Americans and strengthening the workforce. As the inaugural recipient of AACN’s Policy Luminary Award in 2009, you have proven to be a true partner with academic nursing, and we are proud of your recognition as one of the highest ranking nurses in the federal government. AACN values the transformative work you have done as the Administrator for the Health Resources and Services Administration, and we hope to be a resource to you as you move forward in your role as Acting Deputy Secretary.

Our deans are inspired by your leadership and determination to affect positive change in the field of health care, and you motivate thousands of nurses to provide quality care to their patients. As the first nurse to be serving in this role, your appointment is a testament to your valued leadership at the Department of Health and Human Services and it will truly improve the lives of countless patients for years to come.

Once again, congratulations on your appointment. If our association can be of any assistance to you or your staff, please do not hesitate to contact AACN’s Senior Director of Government Affairs and Health Policy, Dr. Suzanne Miyamoto, at Smiyamoto@aacn.nche.edu or 202-463-6930, ext. 247.

Sincerely,

Eileen T. Breslin, PhD, RN, FAAN  
President

Deborah E. Trautman, PhD, RN  
Chief Executive Officer

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