March 18, 2015

The Honorable Senator Susan Collins
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.  20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.  20510

Dear Senator Collins and Senator Schumer,

On behalf of the 41 undersigned organizations representing the Nursing Community, we would like to thank you for introducing the Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act of 2015 (S. 578). Collectively, the Nursing Community represents over one million Registered Nurses, Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), nurse executives, nursing students, nursing faculty, and nurse researchers. Our organizations are committed to improving the health and health care of our nation by collaborating to support the education and practice of APRNs, and therefore fully support this bill.

APRNs provide cost effective, high-quality care and have been recognized by Medicare for 20 years. Home health, in particular, is one area where APRNs are heavily relied upon for their expert clinical skills. Yet, Medicare law currently prohibits APRNs from certifying Medicare patients for the home health benefits and from signing home health plans of care.

The Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act of 2015 would specifically allow nurse practitioners, certified nurse-midwives, and clinical nurse specialists to certify home health services. Our organizations applaud this legislation as it not only supports these APRNs to the full scope of their education and practice, but more important, ensures that patients receive home health services in a timely manner, particularly in rural and underserved areas.

Again, we commend the introduction of S. 578, and appreciate your support for America’s patients and APRNs. If the Nursing Community can be of any assistance to you or your staff, please do not hesitate to contact its convener, Suzanne Miyamoto, at smiyamoto@aacn.nche.edu or 202-463-6930.

Sincerely,

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 Heart Failure Nurses
American Association of Neuroscience Nurses
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 Women’s Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Dermatology Nurses’ Association
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association
Infusion Nurses Society
International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses
National American Arab Nurses Association
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
National Association of Hispanic Nurses
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 Council of State Boards of Nursing
National Getontological Nurses Association
National Nursing Centers Consortium
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs
Oncology Nursing Society
Organization for Associate Degree Nursing
Public Health Nursing Section, American Public Health Association
Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates
Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society