

May 15, 2009

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
United States Senate
722 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-1102

Dear Senator Inouye:

The undersigned organizations thank you for introducing the *Nurse Managed Health Clinic Investment Act of 2009* and commend you on your support of Nurse-Managed Health Clinics (NMHCs). Advanced practice nurses and nurse-managed health clinics have the potential to expand access to primary and preventative care for millions of patients, particularly vulnerable and underserved populations, across the nation. Due to a lack of funding, this potential remains largely untapped.

Expanding health insurance coverage is a top priority of the new administration, but unless access to qualified community-based providers is also increased, newly covered individuals will continue to face barriers to health care. NMHCs are cost-effective and affordable, thus they are perfectly positioned to strengthen the health care safety net and meet the increased demand for providers. These clinics provide primary care, disease prevention, and health promotion wellness services to patients regardless of their ability to pay. NMHCs reinforce the medical home concept by providing a critical first level of care for vulnerable populations with limited access to physicians and other primary care providers. By offering primary care in easily accessible community-based settings, NMHCs help eliminate unnecessary emergency room visits. As well, the range of wellness programs offered through these clinics help to teach those coping with chronic illnesses effective self-management techniques that can lessen the impact of these diseases.

Another important role of NMHCs is to serve as critically-needed clinical practice sites for undergraduate and graduate nursing students. Having a sufficient number of clinical practice sites in which nursing students can have access to the community increases the recruitment and retention of nursing students and faculty. Unfortunately, despite their tremendous benefits, these clinics continue to struggle because of unstable funding and reimbursement bases.

The *Nurse Managed Health Clinic Investment Act of 2009* addresses the problems by creating a grant program to support NMHCs. This important legislation will help to ensure that working families across the country can get the care they need. We sincerely appreciate your willingness to support this legislation and look forward to working with you and your staff. For more information please contact Brian Valdez at (215) 731-7146 or brianv@ncc.us

Sincerely,

The American Academy of Ambulatory Nurses

American Academy of Nurse Practitioners

American Academy of Nursing

American Association of Colleges of Nursing

American Association of Critical-Care Nurses

The American Association of Nurse Anesthetists

American Association of Occupational Health Nurses

American College of Nurse Practitioners

American Nurses Association

The American Organization of Nurse Executives

American Psychiatric Nurses Association

The Association of Faculties of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

Association of Rehabilitation Nurses

Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses

Emergency Nurses Association

Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association

The Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association

Infusion Nurses Society

Institute for Nursing Centers

International Society of Nurses in Genetics

The Legislative Coalition of Virginia Nurses

The National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists

The National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health

The National Association of Orthopaedic Nurses

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National League for Nursing

National Nursing Centers Consortium

National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties

The National Student Nurses' Association, Inc

Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs

Nursing Centers Research Network

Oncology Nursing Society

Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association

RN First Assistants Policy & Advocacy Coalition

Virginia Council of Nurse Practitioners