



September 20, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
House Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson and Leader Jeffries:

On behalf of the 57 undersigned organizations representing the Nursing Community Coalition (NCC), we urge you to consider and pass H.R. 618, the *Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act*, as soon as possible. This bill would retire outdated barriers in the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) that limit the ability of nurse practitioners (NPs) to diagnose and oversee the care and treatment of federal employees who are injured or become ill in the course of their employment. The NCC is a cross section of education, practice, research, and regulation within the nursing profession representing Registered Nurses (RNs), Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs),<sup>1</sup> nurse leaders, boards of nursing, students, faculty, and researchers. We appreciate your continued efforts to improve the health care system for our nation's federal employees and strongly support passage of this bipartisan effort.

Currently, federal employees can select an NP as their health care provider under the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program, and the majority of states authorize NPs to provide the diagnosis and treatment for a workplace related injury. However, contrary to the workers' compensation process in most states, FECA requires that only a physician can make the diagnosis, certify the injury and extent of the disability, and oversee the patient's treatment and care. This barrier places an additional burden on the over two million federal employees,<sup>2</sup> depriving them from receiving health care from their provider of choice, as well as hindering timely access to care and continuity of care.

The *Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act* would update the federal workers' compensation program and authorize NPs to certify disabilities and oversee treatment for injured or ill federal employees under FECA. This would improve access to health care for injured or ill federal employees, particularly in rural and underserved communities, and

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<sup>1</sup> APRNs include certified nurse-midwives (CNMs), certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs), clinical nurse specialists (CNSs) and nurse practitioners (NPs).

<sup>2</sup> Congressional Research Service. "Current Federal Civilian Employment by State and Congressional District." September 22, 2023. Retrieved from: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R47716>.

align the federal workers' compensation program with state law. By updating FECA to authorize federal employees to select their health care provider of choice when they are injured or become ill in the course of their federal employment, greater access, overall efficiency, and better continuity of care can be achieved.

H.R. 618 recently passed the House Committee on Education and the Workforce on June 13, 2024, with a bipartisan vote of 36-0.<sup>3</sup> In addition to having broad, bipartisan support, the Congressional Budget Office also scored the bill as having no additional cost because it could get federal workers back to work quicker.<sup>4</sup>

Again, we urge you to consider and pass H.R. 618, the *Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act*, as soon as possible. Should you have any questions or if the Nursing Community Coalition can be of any additional assistance please contact the coalition's Executive Director, Rachel Minahan, at [rstevenson@thenursingcommunity.org](mailto:rstevenson@thenursingcommunity.org).

Sincerely,

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses  
Academy of Neonatal Nursing  
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing  
American Academy of Emergency Nurse Practitioners  
American Academy of Nursing  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses  
American Association of Heart Failure Nurses  
American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology  
American Association of Nurse Practitioners  
American Association of Occupational Health Nurses  
American Association of Neuroscience Nurses  
American College of Nurse-Midwives  
American Nephrology Nurses Association  
American Nurses Association  
American Psychiatric Nurses Association  
American Nursing Informatics Association  
American Organization for Nursing Leadership  
American Public Health Association, Public Health Nursing Section  
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 Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses  
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

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<sup>3</sup> House Education and Workforce Committee, H.Rept.118-571- Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act. Retrieved from: <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-report/118th-congress/house-report/571/1/outputFormat=pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Congressional Budget Office. Cost Estimate. June 18, 2024. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbo.gov/system/files/2024-06/hr618EdW.pdf>.

Dermatology Nurses' Association  
Friends of the National Institute of Nursing Research  
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 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 Association of School Nurses  
National Black Nurses Association  
National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers  
National League for Nursing  
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium  
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties  
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Organization for Associate Degree Nursing  
Pediatric Endocrinology Nursing Society  
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association  
Society of Pediatric Nurses  
Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates  
Wound, Ostomy, and Continence Nurses Society

cc:

Chairwoman Virginia Foxx, House Education & the Workforce Committee  
Ranking Member Bobby Scott, House Education & the Workforce Committee  
House Majority Leader, Representative Steve Scalise  
House Minority Whip, Representative Katherine Clark  
Representative Tim Walberg  
Representative Joe Courtney