

January 18, 2021

President-Elect Joseph Biden
Vice President-Elect Kamala Harris
c/o The Honorable Ted Kaufman
Chair
Presidential Transition Team
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear President-Elect Biden and Vice President-Elect Harris:

On behalf of the nation's nurse educators, we applaud the transition team's efforts to escalate the federal response to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, including the recent release of the American Rescue Plan, which reinforces the pledge for swift and decisive action in the first 100 days of your Administration. These efforts are imperative, as confirmed COVID-19 cases rise to more than 22.6 million and death rates skyrocket to more than 388,000 individuals.¹ As the voice of academic nursing, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) recognizes the immense challenges before us, as well as the opportunity to mobilize nursing faculty, students, and staff in the ongoing fight against this public health emergency.

AACN represents over 840 member schools of nursing at private and public universities, who educate more than 560,000 baccalaureate, graduate, and post-graduate students, and employ more than 50,000 faculty members who serve as scientists, educators, and practitioners on the frontlines. From Delaware to California and across America's heartland, our nursing faculty and students are already administering COVID-19 vaccines. In fact, states, such as Pennsylvania, are expanding authority of supervised nursing students to administer a vaccine outside of their traditional clinical placement.² Our members are volunteering their time as part of the Medical Reserve Corps, as supervisors for students, as trackers, tracers, and testers, and as individuals confronting hesitancy by publically receiving their doses of the vaccine. With increasing hospitalizations and positive COVID-19 cases, having our schools, faculty, and students assist with vaccination efforts allows our nation's registered nurses (RNs) and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) to dedicate their efforts to what they do best - caring for patients in need.

This is not the first time AACN members have answered the call to mobilize in response to a federal priority. In the midst of the opioid epidemic, and working with the Obama Administration, AACN joined with more than 40 healthcare groups to launch a national nursing education initiative for our schools in support of a broad public awareness campaign.³ AACN is ready to take action again by:

- Issuing a Call to Action to our members to continue and expand vaccination efforts;
- Partnering with the Biden Administration on all COVID-19 responses;
- Collaborating with key federal agencies and the research community on any initiatives and projects that are put forward;

¹ Johns Hopkins University and Medicine, Coronavirus Resource Center. Retrieved from: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/>

² Pennsylvania Department of State, "Pennsylvania Expands Authority of Supervised Nursing Students to Administer Vaccines Outside Their Clinical Placements." December 24, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.dos.pa.gov/Pages/2020-12-24-Supervised-Nursing-Students-Administer-Vaccines.aspx>

³ American Association of Colleges of Nursing, "AACN Partners with the White House to Educate America's Nurses on Prescription Drug Abuse." October 21, 2015. <https://www.aacnursing.org/News-Information/Press-Releases/View/ArticleId/21525/prescription-drug-abuse>

- Addressing vaccine hesitancy through educational outreach and through our existing partnership with NIH to support the *All of Us* Research program.
- Maximizing our academic/practice partnerships, especially as states have varying plans, restrictions, and operating procedures.
- Continuing our [COVID-19 webinars](#) to inform and engage AACN members and stakeholders.
- Utilizing AACN's vast communication network and social media channels to reach more than 47,000 students, faculty, and stakeholders with information about provider awareness campaigns, CDC guidelines, best practices, and other courses of action.

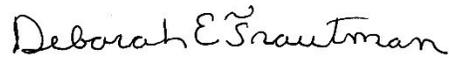
We appreciate the framework you put forward in the American Rescue Plan and support additional investments in our communities, including vaccine efforts, mobilizing a public health jobs program, and addressing health disparities. AACN also recognizes the need for expansion of higher education emergency relief and other safety and economic initiatives as these directly impact our current and future frontline providers. As this vision becomes reality, it is crucial to include our nursing schools, faculty, and students as they represent an underutilized, highly educated, and qualified workforce ready to assist with vaccine administration and with successful implementation of this plan.

We are proud of our nurse educators and students who illustrate their tenacity, courage, and leadership in the fight against COVID-19. AACN, and our nursing schools in communities across the country, stand ready to be active partners with the Biden Administration in your efforts to combat the pandemic. If AACN can be of any assistance, please contact Dr. Colleen Leners, Director of Policy, at cleners@aacnnursing.org, and Rachel Stevenson, Director of Government Affairs, at rstenenson@aacnnursing.org. AACN enthusiastically looks forward to working with you as we address this public health challenge.

Sincerely,



Susan Bakewell-Sachs, PhD, RN, FAAN
Board Chair



Deborah E. Trautman, PhD, RN, FAAN
President and Chief Executive Officer