



February 8, 2017

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Chairman  
Senate Special Committee on Aging  
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bob Casey  
Ranking Member  
Senate Special Committee on Aging  
628 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Collins and Ranking Member Casey,

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), we look forward to working with you and the Senate Special Committee on Aging in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress. As you and your colleagues address our nation's most pressing priorities, please know that our association stands ready to serve as a resource to you and the committee. As the national voice for academic nursing, AACN's membership is comprised of 800 schools of nursing with baccalaureate and graduate programs. Our member schools educate over 457,000 nursing students and prepare many of the profession's finest leaders who are working to improve America's health through advancements in education, research, and clinical practice.

Since the association was established in 1969, AACN has fostered collaborative relationships with other nursing organizations, the broader healthcare and higher education communities, Congress, and the Administration. Through these partnerships, we have helped improve and advance policies that establish the critical role nurses play in delivering high quality, cost-effective, team-based health care. During this Congress, AACN stands ready to work with you and your staff on issues related to improving health care in our country.

Inter-professionalism, sustainability, innovation, collaboration, equity, and inclusiveness are the core policy values highlighted in AACN's 2017-2018 Federal Policy Agenda. We believe these principles are necessary to strengthen and advance the current healthcare delivery system. As the committee explores Veterans' health care related issues in America, AACN stands ready to serve as an expert voice on nursing and the workforce.

### **Nursing Workforce**

Older Americans deserve security when it comes to their healthcare. This includes a highly-educated nursing workforce that is prepared to treat the needs of elderly patients. Our schools integrate geriatric care into the education of registered nurses and advanced practice registered nurses students and in academic year 2015-2016, there were 8,574 APRN students and 2,056 graduates of gerontology-focused nursing programs. These providers will be responsible for treating the growing number of aging Americans and addressing trends in their care, including opioid use and nutrition- issues that the committee has inspected over the past year.

If AACN can be of service, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Suzanne Miyamoto, Chief Policy Officer, at [Smiyamoto@aacn.nche.edu](mailto:Smiyamoto@aacn.nche.edu) or Lauren Inouye, Director of Government Affairs, at [Linouye@aacn.nche.edu](mailto:Linouye@aacn.nche.edu).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Juliann G. Sebastian".

Juliann G. Sebastian, PhD, RN, FAAN  
Board Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah E. Trautman".

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

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