February 5, 2008

The Honorable Tom Harkin  The Honorable Arlen Specter
Chairman     Ranking Member
Labor, HHS, and Education Subcommittee Labor, HHS, and Education Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20510    Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Specter:

On behalf of the American Nephrology Nurses’ Association (ANNA), a I am writing to express our appreciation for increasing the Nursing Workforce Development Programs (Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act) at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in the fiscal year (FY) 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act.

As you may know, ANNA is a professional nursing organization of more than 12,000 registered nurses practicing in nephrology. ANNA members are intimately involved in the supervision and delivery of care to adults and children with kidney disease. Our members work in a variety of settings including dialysis facilities, transplant centers, Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) clinics, acute care, ambulatory clinics, and long term care. ANNA’s purpose is to advance nephrology nursing practice and positively influence outcomes for patients with kidney disease through advocacy, scholarship, and excellence.

Your efforts have provided $167,652,000, an increase of 12% for these vital programs over the previous year’s funding. The Nursing Workforce Development programs are the main source of federal support for nursing recruitment, education, and retention. Nearly every person’s health care experience involves a nurse, and as a result, a sufficient supply of nurses is critical in providing our nation with quality health care. Studies show that the supply of nurses will fall 36 percent (more than 1 million nurses) by the year 2020. The increased funding for these programs will provide the resources to combat this shortfall by providing for loan repayment and scholarships, and funding to schools of nursing to and graduate a larger percentage of nurses, providing this country with the means to quality and comprehensive health services.

Thank you again for taking action to increase Title VIII funding in FY 2008. We look forward to working with you in the coming second session of the 110th Congress to continue to provide adequate funding for these important programs. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or our Washington Representative, Jim Twaddell (james.twaddell@dbr.com/202-230-5634), if you have any questions or if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Sandy Bodin, MA, RN, CNN
President

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