May 15, 2009

The Honorable Tom Latham
United States House of Representatives
2217 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC  20515

Dear Representative Latham:

On behalf of the American Nephrology Nurses’ Association (ANNA), I am writing to express our appreciation for your introduction of the Nurses’ Higher Education and Loan Repayment Act of 2009 (H.R. 1460). This important legislation will help address the nursing faculty shortage, which is greatly impacting the ability of the country to have an adequate nursing workforce.

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.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there is currently a nursing shortage of 2.5 million registered nurses in the United States. A report issued by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Projected Supply, Demand, and Shortages of Registered Nurses: 2000-2020, predicts that the nursing shortage is expected to grow to 41 percent by year 2020.

The continuation of this shortage is the direct result of colleges and university schools of nursing being unable to meet the demand of students wishing to enter the nursing profession. According to a study conducted by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), titled Special Survey for AACN Membership on Vacant Faculty Positions for Academic Year 2007-2008, “30,000 qualified applicants were turned away from baccalaureate nursing programs last year due primarily to an intensifying shortage of nurse faculty.”
Thank you again for taking positive steps towards addressing the nursing faculty shortage through the introduction of H.R. 1460, the *Nurses’ Higher Education and Loan Repayment Act of 2009*. We appreciate your support and look forward to working with you.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or our Washington Representative, Jim Twaddell (james.twaddell@dbr.com/202-230-5130), if you have any questions or if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Donna Bednarski, MSN RN ANP-BC CNN CNP
ANNA President