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NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 17, 2007

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**AMERICAN NURSES ASSOCIATION AND THE AMERICAN MEDICAL
ASSOCIATION ISSUE A JOINT STATEMENT ON CRIMINALIZING MEDICAL
DECISIONS**

Silver Spring, MD — The American Nurses Association (ANA) and the American Medical Association (AMA) continue to be very concerned about criminalizing decisions about patient care especially those made during the chaotic aftermath of a disaster, when medical personnel and supplies are severely compromised. During any disaster, health care providers - doctors, nurses and others - must work together to make the best decisions that they can given available resources.

Judgments regarding these decisions and subsequent actions would be more properly considered by the respective licensing boards. This criminal prosecution will chill future responses of health practitioners during a major disaster for fear of having their best judgments second guessed. Hurricane Katrina is not the last disaster that we are going to face; the ANA and the AMA urge that strong consideration be given to the harmful repercussions of continuing the prosecution of this case.

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The ANA is the only full-service professional organization representing the interests of the nation's 2.9 million registered nurses through its 54 constituent member nurses associations. The ANA advances the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting the rights of nurses in the workplace, projecting a positive and realistic view of nursing, and by lobbying the Congress and regulatory agencies on health care issues affecting nurses and the public.