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NEWS RELEASE



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ANA GIVES STATEMENT AT HEALTH CARE REFORM HEARINGS

SILVER SPRING, MD – The American Nurses Association (ANA) gave a statement on Capitol Hill Wednesday, November 19th on the issue of health care reform. ANA submitted a statement at the Senate Finance Committee hearing on *Health Care Reform: An Economic Perspective* emphasizing the need to address workforce issues along with the issues of quality, access and cost.

While ANA applauded the plan’s author, Senator Max Baucus (D-MT), for bringing attention to this vital issue, and voiced willingness to work with Senator Baucus and others to achieve comprehensive health reform, ANA also stressed the fundamental role registered nurses must play to transform the current “sick care” system into a true “health care” system. “RNs are the backbone of hospitals, community clinics, school health programs, home health and long-term care programs, among many other roles and settings. The support, development and deployment of this keystone profession is essential for any quality health reform plan to succeed.”

ANA addressed the need to examine the issue of workforce as a vital component of any health care plan. “Concentrating one’s focus on a guarantee of coverage only promises to place more people into a broken system. Failure to address issues related to the delivery of care will strain the health infrastructure even more than it already is today.”

To see ANA’s complete statement please visit,
<http://nursingworld.org/FunctionalMenuCategories/MediaResources/PressReleases/2008PR/Written-Statement-Health-Care-Reform-An-Economic-Perspective.aspx>

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In addition to its work on Capitol Hill, ANA is taking an active role in raising public awareness of the need for health system reform. ANA is a partner in Health Care for America Now (HCAN) and Divided We Fail, campaigns working to organize millions of Americans to work toward health care for all. ANA has also been a partner in Cover the Uninsured Week since its inception in 2000. The campaign is an annual event designed to focus attention on the plight of the nearly 47 million Americans, who lack health coverage, as well as to highlight the efforts being made by various states and communities to cover these individuals and their families. The campaign also works to ensure that people who are uninsured get enrolled in public coverage programs if they are eligible.

ANA's advocacy for guaranteed affordable health care for all is reflected in its recently revised *ANA's Health System Reform Agenda*, rooted in decades of policy work. In 1989, ANA's "Task Force on Health Policy Support of Access, Quality and Cost Efficiency" began a collaboration with the broader nursing community to create *Nursing's Agenda for Health Care Reform* (ANA, 1991). This blueprint for reform, endorsed by 60 nursing and health care organizations, serves as an urgent call for health system reform and is part of ANA's professional and ethical obligation to maintain the integrity of nursing practice and pursue the best possible health care for the nation's people.

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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, its 23 organizational affiliates serving 330,000 members of national nursing specialty organizations, and its workforce advocacy affiliate, the Center for American Nurses. 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.