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NEWS RELEASE



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CONGRESS PASSES MENTAL HEALTH PARITY LEGISLATION
ANA applauds crucial bill that removes barriers to mental health care

SILVER SPRING, MD – The American Nurses Association (ANA) is pleased to announce the passage of the Paul Wellstone Mental Health & Addiction Equity Act (H.R. 1424). By a vote of 268 to 149 the House of Representatives passed the measure, which would end longstanding insurance discrimination and removes barriers to care for those facing mental illness.

“We at the American Nurses Association believe the enactment of mental health parity legislation is fundamental to the delivery of comprehensive healthcare,” said President Rebecca M. Patton, MSN, RN, CNOR. “ANA remains committed to ensuring access to quality health care that meets the needs of all Americans.”

The Senate passed a version of the Mental Health Parity Act (S. 558) by unanimous consent in September. Now, Senate and House leaders must work together to reconcile differences between the two versions and produce a bill that can pass in both chambers. ANA calls on the House and Senate to enact meaningful mental health parity legislation before the end of this Congress.

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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.