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**NEWS RELEASE**



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### **American Nurses Association Leads Call for Healthcare Reform on Capitol Hill**

**SILVER SPRING, MD** – The American Nurses Association (ANA) led a contingent of nurses in a demonstration on Capitol Hill today urging congressional action on healthcare reform this year that will further ANA’s goal of guaranteed, affordable, high-quality health care for all.

Dozens of nurses from as far away as Florida and New York joined the ANA group in the crowded rally and Town Hall-style gatherings organized by Health Care for America Now, a coalition of which ANA is a member. In meetings with members of Congress and at the Town Hall forums, nurses spread the word of ANA’s core healthcare reform principles. Among those: that health care is a basic human right; that a public health insurance plan option must be created to expand choice and control costs; and that a sufficient and fully utilized nursing workforce is necessary to ensure access to quality care.

“We want to make sure nurses’ voices are heard and our perspective is included in the debate as the healthcare reform proposals move forward,” said ANA Chief Programs Officer Mary Jean Schumann, MSN, MBA, RN, CPNP. “Nurses are integral to the quality of care and efficiency of our healthcare system. We want to take part in shaping policy and not have policy dictated to us.”

The nurses expressed the need to address the current nurse shortage, which is expected to deepen in the coming years, by bolstering programs to recruit more nurses into educational programs and develop more nursing faculty. As another top priority, the nurses also advocated that Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) be allowed to practice to the full extent of their education, training and licensure, saying that APRNs can help alleviate the shortage of primary care health services.

**MORE . . .**

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“We have a workforce in the nursing profession that has the training and skills to contribute greatly to the improvements we say we want in our healthcare system – more emphasis on prevention and wellness services, better coordination of care for people with chronic diseases, more education for patients. These are measures that will reduce costs in the long run,” said Schumann. “ANA’s participation in this important rally is one way that we can make Congress and the nation aware of what nurses can do.”

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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 51 constituent member nurses associations and its 24 specialty nursing and workforce advocacy affiliate organizations that currently connect to ANA as affiliates. 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.*