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**NEWS RELEASE**



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**The American Nurses Association applauds President Obama's nomination of Dr. Howard Koh, HSPH, as Assistant Secretary for Health in the Department of Health and Human Services**

**SILVER SPRING, MD** – The American Nurses Association (ANA) applauds President Obama's nomination of Dr. Howard Koh, HSPH, as Assistant Secretary for Health in the Department of Health and Human Services. Dr. Koh, who currently serves as an associate dean at the Harvard School of Public Health, has been tapped to manage the Centers for Disease Control, the Food and Drug Administration, and the National Institutes of Health.

"From nursing's perspective, the appointment of Dr. Howard Koh as the Assistant Secretary of Health is great news for health care reform," said Karen Daley, MS, MPH, RN, FAAN and Director at Large on the ANA Board of Directors. "While the ongoing financial crisis continues to dominate the debate in Washington, and across the country, it is by no means our only priority. Those who argue that health care reform must take a back seat to solving our economic troubles fail to see the bigger picture. Dr. Koh is acutely aware of the burden that rising health care costs place on federal, state, and local governments. Currently more than 16 percent of the U.S. gross national product goes toward health care annually. In my home state of Massachusetts, health care expenditures total about 14 percent of the gross state product. That adds up to more than \$6600 per capita, with an estimated growth rate of about six percent per year. Getting these costs under control should be a priority. "

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“I know Howard personally from his work in Massachusetts,” Daley added. “And I am excited to see such a talented, energetic and committed public health expert appointed to this influential post. I can say with the utmost confidence, based on his appointment, that people across the US now have an unwavering champion - someone who will bring to this post a clear understanding of the need for a health care system that is socially just, evidence-based, and preventive in its focus.”

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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.*

