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NEWS RELEASE



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**AACN and ANA Host the Inaugural Senate Nursing Caucus Event to Release
the Results of the 2008 National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses**

Silver Spring, MD -- Today, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) and the American Nurses Association (ANA) hosted the inaugural briefing of the Senate Nursing Caucus to announce release of the final results from the *2008 National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses (NSSRN)*. Titled "A Snapshot of America's Nursing Workforce: Preparing for the Future Demand," the event featured an address by Mary Wakefield, PhD, RN, FAAN, Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Prepared every four years by HRSA, the *NSSRN* compiles the most comprehensive data available on the registered nurse (RN) workforce in the U.S., including information on education, diversity, employment setting, career satisfaction, and factors related to the future supply of RNs.

Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR), co-chair of the Senate Nursing Caucus, began the event by introducing Dr. Wakefield and explaining the importance of nursing to the healthcare delivery system. "My wife's career as a nurse has helped me understand the integral role these providers play in our health care system. As a co-chair of the Senate Nursing Caucus, I appreciate Dr. Wakefield's breakdown of the *2008 National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses*- her analysis can help us advance the discussion on how to best support and advance the nursing profession," stated Senator Merkley.

"The findings from the *2008 National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses* shows what an effective partnership between HRSA and the nursing community can yield," said Dr. Wakefield. "Funding for faculty development has helped increase the number of young nurses entering the

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profession. We are also encouraged by the increasing diversity of the workforce which HRSA fully supports. These gains are critical to ensuring that nursing is ready to embrace the opportunities that health reform presents.”

Held at the Capitol Visitors Center in Washington, DC, the event was well attended by Congressional staff, nursing leaders, and organizational representatives, and demonstrated the importance that quality data has to creating policies that will help build a robust nursing workforce. “The *National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses* enables us to plan for future demand and evaluate the distribution of RNs and their ability to meet the needs of American patients. These data are especially critical for states like Maine that have pockets of remote populations. I look forward to the future work of the Senate Nursing Caucus so that we can thoughtfully address needed policy challenges,” said Senator Olympia Snowe (R-ME), co-chair of the Senate Nursing Caucus.

AACN and ANA were honored to host this briefing as the inaugural event of the Senate Nursing Caucus. AACN President Kathleen Potempa, PhD, RN, FAAN, remarked, “We are pleased to be a part of this historic event that highlights the intersection of nursing education, practice, data, and policy. On behalf of our members, we look forward to continuing our work with the Senate Nursing Caucus, HRSA, ANA, and members of the nursing community to ensure America’s patients have access to quality nursing care.”

“As the landscape of health care changes, it is vitally important that we have a nursing workforce that can adapt and address these changes. We appreciate the value of a forum like the Senate Nursing Caucus to address the issues that impact nursing, and we welcome a healthy exchange of ideas that will serve to strengthen the nursing workforce and ultimately improve the quality of care we provide,” said ANA President Karen Daley, PhD, MPH, RN, FAAN.

Formed on March 25, 2010, the Caucus is co-chaired by Senator Merkley, Senator Mike Johanns (R-NE), Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), and Senator Snowe. Since that time, nine additional Senators have joined the Caucus to help advance nursing policy. “I have tremendous respect and admiration for nurses,” Senator Mikulski said. “Nurses are the front lines of the healthcare system, but too often they are overworked, underpaid, and underappreciated. I am proud to be a founding co-chair of the Senate Nursing Caucus, and I will continue to fight for policies that

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create opportunities for nurses now and help educate the nurses of tomorrow.”

“We established the Senate Nursing Caucus to hone in on the barriers the national nursing shortage has presented to high quality patient care. The nursing profession offers a dynamic career opportunity for individuals seeking an intense and rewarding position. I am pleased to join my colleagues in the Senate Nursing Caucus to host our first briefing and seek ways to address RN workforce concerns,” said Senator Johanns.

For more information about the Senate Nursing Caucus see:

<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Government/SenNursingCaucus.htm> and
<http://www.nursingworld.org/SenateNursingCaucus.aspx>

For more information about the *National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses* see:

<http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/rnsurvey>

For more information about AACN and ANA see:

<http://www.aacn.nche.edu> and <http://www.nursingworld.org>

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The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) is the national voice for university and four-year college education programs in nursing. Representing more than 650 member schools of nursing at public and private institutions nationwide, AACN's educational, research, governmental advocacy, data collection, publications, and other programs work to establish quality standards for bachelor's- and graduate-degree nursing education, assist deans and directors to implement those standards, influence the nursing profession to improve health care, and promote public support of baccalaureate and graduate nursing education, research, and practice.

The American Nurses Association (ANA) is the only full-service professional organization representing the interests of the nation's 3.1 million registered nurses through its constituent member nurses associations, its organizational affiliates, 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.