ANA President to Congress: Better Funding Needed to Address RN Shortage

SILVER SPRING, MD – American Nurses Association President Karen A. Daley, PhD, MPH, RN, FAAN, informed a congressional committee today that there is a critical need to develop a stronger nursing workforce to fill a projected 1.2 million nursing jobs that will open within the next decade and to meet the increasing health care demand of an aging population.

In Daley’s testimony submitted to the House Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, she requested support for nursing workforce development (Title VIII, Public Health Service Act) and nurse-managed health clinics. She also noted that nurses are essential to the nation’s health care system, and Title VIII funding is needed now more than ever as a large cohort of RNs is expected to retire in the coming years.

“Cuts to Title VIII funding would be detrimental to the health care system and could jeopardize patient care,” Daley told committee members. “I am concerned that Title VIII funding levels have not been sufficient to address the growing nursing shortage.”

Referring to the influx of Baby Boomers, which will increase Medicare enrollment 50 percent by 2025, Daley said demand for nursing care will increase greatly not only in hospitals, but for settings such as home care and long-term care.

Daley also emphasized the need to develop more nurse educators through funding for nursing education, as qualified nursing school applicants are being turned away due to insufficient clinical preceptors and teaching sites, lack of faculty, and nursing schools’ limited capacity overall. Educational capacity remains a major factor contributing to the nursing shortage.

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*The ANA is the only full-service professional organization representing the interests of the nation's 3.1 million registered nurses through its constituent and state nurses associations and its organizational 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.*