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**NEWS RELEASE**



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**THE AMERICAN NURSES ASSOCIATION HOLDS CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING IN  
SUPPORT OF HOME HEALTH CARE LEGISLATION**  
*Highlights New Research Showing Significant Cost-Savings for Medicare*

**SILVER SPRING, MD** – The American Nurses Association (ANA) held a Congressional briefing on Sept. 27 in Washington, D.C, urging lawmakers to support the bipartisan “Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act of 2011” (H.R. 2267, S.227). The bill would remove a barrier to practice in Medicare by ensuring APRNs can sign home health plans — the current law puts an undue burden on the patient, leading to delays in home health services and increased costs for patients. During the briefing ANA also highlighted compelling results from a [new study](#) that found implementation of the law will lead to a cost savings of \$309 million over ten years for Medicare.

Re-introduced in the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress by Representatives Greg Walden (R-OR) and Allyson Schwartz (D-PA) and Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Kent Conrad (D-ND), the bill would allow advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) – nurse practitioners (NPs), clinical nurse specialists (CNSs), certified nurse midwives (CNMs), physician assistants (PAs) – to order home health services and fulfill the face-to-face requirement in accordance to state law. Currently, a quirk in Medicare law has prevented APRNs from having the authority to sign home health plans and certify Medicare patients for the home health benefit. Despite their proven track record in

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providing timely access to quality patient care, APRNs remain unable to order home health services for their Medicare patients.

The Congressional briefing is the latest step in ANA's ongoing efforts to advocate for passage of the Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act of 2011. Today, ANA also hosted a [Home Health Virtual Lobby Day](#), enabling hundreds of nurses across the country to contact their members of Congress and urge them to support this legislation.

“As the Super Committee searches for ways to save on government spending, with a cost-savings of \$309 million, the Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act is a great place to start,” said ANA President Karen Daley, PhD, MPH, RN, FAAN. “ANA strongly supports this critically important bipartisan legislation, which in addition to saving money, would ensure better patient access to care and remove barriers for nurses as qualified providers.”

The bill is supported by the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, American Academy of Physician Assistants, the American College of Nurse Midwives, the American College of Nurse Practitioners, the National Association of Home Care and Hospice, and the Visiting Nurse Associations of America.

“It is not right that APRNs and PAs can certify Medicare eligibility for skilled nursing facility services but are prohibited from certifying home health services to Medicare beneficiaries,” said Val J. Halamandaris, president of the National Association of Home Care and Hospice. “This legislation is long overdue.”

To learn more about ANA's work on the home health care issue, visit [www.rnaction.org/homehealth](http://www.rnaction.org/homehealth).

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*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 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.*