

## Improving Care and Access to Nurses (I CAN) Act

**ANA urges you to cosponsor the *Improving Care and Access to Nurses (I CAN) Act* (H.R. 1317 / S. 575).**

The bipartisan I CAN Act would remove arbitrary, outdated barriers in the Medicare and Medicaid programs that currently prevent Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) from practicing to the full extent of their education and clinical training. Removing these barriers will also increase patients' timely access to care from the provider of their choice. **The bill does not supersede state laws or change any provider's scope of practice.**

From primary and maternal care to acute and chronic care, APRNs serve in all settings and in areas throughout the nation, including rural and underserved communities. As of 2020, over 233,000 APRNs treated Medicare patients and approximately 40% of Medicare beneficiaries received care from an APRN. Over half of rural Medicare patients see a Nurse Practitioner annually.

Despite clear evidence and broad recognition of the **importance of APRNs** to our health care workforce and the quality of care they deliver, outdated federal statutes and regulations remain which require unnecessary physician oversight or otherwise arbitrarily limit APRN practice. These laws and regulations prevent APRNs from practicing to the full extent of their education and clinical training, reduce access to care, create disruptions in care, increase the cost of care, and undermine efforts to improve the quality of care.

Removing these beneficiary access barriers to APRNs in Medicare and Medicaid is consistent with recommendations from a broad range of organizations, including the **National Academy of Medicine, the National Governors Association, the National Rural Health Association, the Federal Trade Commission, the Bipartisan Policy Center, the Brookings Institution, Americans for Prosperity, the American Enterprise Institute, and AARP.**

*This bipartisan bill is being led by Senators Jeff Merkley (OR) and Cynthia Lummis (WY) and Representatives Dave Joyce (OH), Suzanne Bonamici (OR), Lauren Underwood (IL), and Jen Kiggans (VA).*

### Facts at a Glance

- APRNs include nurse practitioners (NPs), certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs), certified nurse-midwives (CNMs), and clinical nurse specialists (CNSs).
- APRNs are prepared at the masters or doctoral level.
- While the nursing and medical models of training are different, the safety and quality of APRN competency-based education is consistently demonstrated in more than 40 years of patient care research.
- American Enterprise Institute found that a large and growing body of research shows that the quality of care provided by NPs is as good and, in some cases, even better than the care provided by primary care physicians<sup>1</sup>.
- The bill is under the jurisdiction of the Senate Finance Committee and both the House Energy & Commerce and Ways & Means Committees.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/nurse-practitioners-a-solution-to-americas-primary-care-crisis/>