



## **The U.S. House of Representatives Passes Critical Legislation that will Bolster the Nursing Workforce and Advance Health**

July 23, 2018- Today, the Nursing Community Coalition (NCC) commends the U.S. House of Representatives for passing the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Act of 2017 (H.R. 959). This action shows direct support for the fundamental connection between building the nursing workforce capacity and our nation's health.

The core underpinning of the Nursing Community Coalition for the past decade has been to the support the Nursing Workforce Development Programs (authorized under Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 296 et. seq]). Outlining it as the coalition's top priority for the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress, H.R. 959 is bipartisan legislation that the nation's nursing organizations see as critical to our ability to educate the next generation of nursing leaders who will transform health in every community.

"Our nation will soon face a nursing shortage, so we need to do all we can to make sure those who are interested in this valued career path have access to high-quality education opportunities," said Congressman Dave Joyce. "As the husband of a nurse and co-chair of the Congressional Nursing Caucus, I know the amount of dedication, care, and support nurses put into their daily task of caring for every patient. I am thankful for the incredible bipartisan support this bill has received on behalf of our nation's nurses."

"Our nurses must have the quality training needed to respond to the needs of our community - from an aging population, to an increase in chronic diseases, to a worsening opioid epidemic, and more. But nursing shortages in Hawai'i and across the country are putting patient health at risk and increasing healthcare costs," said Representative Tulsi Gabbard. "Our bipartisan legislation takes a vital step forward in providing our nurses with training, education, and financial support so they can serve the people in our communities."

NCC deeply appreciates the legislation's sponsor Representative David Joyce (R-OH), along with the original cosponsors, Representatives Doris Matsui (D-CA), Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI), Rodney Davis (R-IL), Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR), and Kathy Castor (D-FL) for their unwavering commitment to the nursing profession. In total, 105 members of the House supported H.R. 959 underscoring the momentum among federal legislators that access, cost, and quality cannot be improved without investing in the nursing workforce.

As the national nursing and nurse faculty shortages continues to loom heavily, primary and chronic care demands accelerate, there is no better time than now to invest in a healthier tomorrow. H.R. 959 would reauthorize the Nursing Workforce Development Programs through Fiscal Year 2023 and make modernizations with trends in the profession.

NCC is energized by the House's action and turn our attention to support our champions in the Senate, Senators Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Richard Burr (R-NC), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), and Susan Collins (R-ME) to advance their version of the bill, S. 1109.

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*The Nursing Community Coalition includes 60 national nursing organizations that are the cross section of education, practice, research, and regulation within the profession. Collectively, the coalition represents over one million registered nurses, advanced practice registered nurses, nurse faculty, nurse executives, researchers, and students. The coalition is committed to promoting efforts that advance the health of our nation through nursing care.*