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NEWS RELEASE



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**ANA MOURNS THE LOSS OF SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY, A CHAMPION
FOR HEALTH CARE REFORM**

A Statement from ANA President Rebecca M. Patton, MSN, RN, CNOR

SILVER SPRING, MD – We at the American Nurses Association would like to express our profound sadness at the loss of Senator Edward M. Kennedy, a true champion for health care reform. Every single American, regardless of political affiliation, can say their lives were bettered by his extraordinary accomplishments in the Senate over several decades. But it is his tireless work on what he called ‘the fight of his life,’ health care, where he leaves his greatest legacy.

As a health care professional, I believe his positive influence on our health care system is immeasurable. In addition to his efforts to expand and improve health care, he was a driving force behind the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), The State Children’s Insurance Program (S-CHIP), and Mental Health Parity legislation.

What was most remarkable about Senator Kennedy was that he always remembered people far removed from the world of power and influence. As an advocate of the Federal Needlestick Prevention Act, he took the time to personally phone a nurse who had contracted HIV through a needle stick injury, to let her know that the bill that would help protect nurses had passed and was on its way to be signed into law. This act of kindness and generosity of spirit was not an unusual occurrence.

The Senator was a gifted statesman and a strong force for positive change throughout his remarkable and long career. Our deepest sympathies go out to the Kennedy family and to the nation for his passing.

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The ANA is the only full-service professional organization representing the interests of the nation's 2.9 million registered nurses through its 51 constituent member nurses associations and its 24 specialty nursing and workforce advocacy affiliate organizations that currently connect to ANA as 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.