

May 21, 2024

The Hon. Bernie Sanders, Chair  
Senate HELP Committee  
United States Senate  
428 Senate Dirksen Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Hon. Bill Cassidy, M.D., Ranking Member  
Senate HELP Committee  
United States Senate  
725 Senate Hart Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

**Subject: ANA Letter in Support of S. 3679**

Dear Chairman Sanders and Ranking Member Cassidy:

The American Nurses Association (ANA) applauds the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee for its consideration and anticipated advancement of S. 3679, the *Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Reauthorization Act*, to ensure that nurses and other health care professionals have continued access to the tools and resources that they need to improve their mental health and well-being.

ANA is the premier organization representing the interests of the nation's 5 million registered nurses (RNs), through its constituent and state nurses associations, organizational affiliates, and individual members. RNs serve in multiple direct care, care coordination, and administrative leadership roles, across the full spectrum of healthcare settings. RNs provide and coordinate patient care, educate patients and the public about various health conditions, and provide advice and emotional support to patients and their family members. ANA members also include those practicing in the four advanced registered nurse (APRN) roles: nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, certified nurse-midwives, and certified registered nurse anesthetists. ANA is dedicated to partnering with healthcare consumers to improve practices, policies, delivery models, outcomes, and access across the healthcare continuum.

Nurses are experiencing an unprecedented rate of burnout, and even a [higher risk of suicide](#) compared to the general population. This is due to several factors, including but not limited to high workforce turnover, long consecutive shifts, inadequate staffing levels, and exposure to trauma resulting from workplace violence. In fact, a [2022 survey](#) by the American Nurses Foundation (ANF) found that 56% of nurses report feeling symptoms of burnout. Despite high levels of burnout, about two-thirds of nurses surveyed were not receiving any type of mental health care support. Policymakers and the health care community need to do more to address the unique challenges that impact the nursing profession, including addressing the stigma around mental health that acts as a barrier to asking for help.

ANA welcomes this committee's anticipated passage of S. 3679. Specifically, this bill would authorize continued investments to train health care professionals and students on strategies to prevent or mitigate suicide and burnout, with priority going to rural communities and those with staffing shortages. It would also invest in a national evidence-based education and

awareness campaign to remove the stigma around mental health and substance use disorders. ANA urges Senate Leadership to expeditiously bring S. 3679 to the floor for final passage following committee approval.

In closing, we appreciate this opportunity to share ANA's perspective and welcomes the committee to contact Tim Nanof, Vice President of Policy and Government Affairs, at (301) 628-5081 or [Tim.Nanof@ana.org](mailto:Tim.Nanof@ana.org) with any questions or requests.

Sincerely,



Debbie Hatmaker, PhD, RN, FAAN  
Chief Nursing Officer / EVP

cc: Senator Tim Kaine (Virginia)  
Senator Todd Young (Indiana)  
Senator Jack Reed (Rhode Island)  
Jennifer Mensik Kennedy, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN, ANA President  
Angela Beddoe, ANA Interim Chief Executive Officer  
Tim Nanof, MSW, Vice President, Policy & Government Affairs