

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

December 17, 2013

The Honorable Eric Shinseki  
Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
801 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Shinseki,

We are writing to express our support for the work being done in the Veterans Administration (VA) to address the growing demand for healthcare services through the Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) Nursing Handbook 1180.03 to recognize Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) as Licensed Independent Practitioners (LIPs).

The VHA is a leader in innovative healthcare delivery models providing care to over 8.3 million Veterans each year. Through its many medical centers, community-based outpatient centers, and other clinical sites, American service men and women rely on access to timely, efficient, and high-quality care. The VHA has taken steps to help ensure our nation's Veterans have improved care delivery by recognizing APRNs including Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA), Certified Nurse Midwives (CNMW), Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) and Nurse Practitioners as LIPs in the Nursing Handbook. Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) will be recognized as LIPs while their practice remains under the guidance of VHA Anesthesia Handbook 1123. This recognition is consistent with the evidence-based recommendations advanced by the Institute of Medicine in its report, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, as well as with healthcare delivery and workforce roles within the branches of our U.S. Armed Forces. APRNs are skilled practitioners that not only increase access to care, but reduce cost while improving quality. As LIPs, APRNs will provide care to the full scope of their education and training and give the VHA the flexibility to utilize all providers within the healthcare team, maximizing resources and providing optimal care.

We applaud the VA for its continued commitment to help expand high quality health care services to our Veterans and believe that recognizing APRNs as LIPs will help achieve this goal. We urge the VA to finalize and begin implementation of the proposed VHA Nursing Handbook to continue improving healthcare for our Veterans throughout the country.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important matter.

Sincerely,

  
LOIS CAPPS  
Member of Congress

  
DAVID P. JOYCE  
Member of Congress

DAVID N. CICILLINE  
Member of Congress

SAM GRAVES  
Member of Congress

JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY  
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CAROL SHEA-PORTER  
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DAVID E. PRICE  
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SUZANNE BONAMICI  
Member of Congress



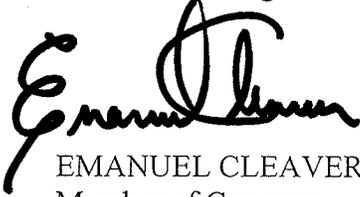
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EMANUEL CLEAVER  
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LOUISE MCINTOSH SLAUGHTER  
Member of Congress



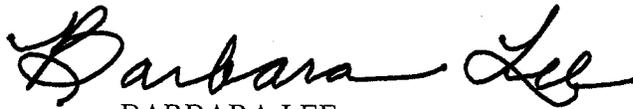
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