Sara Feigenholz

State Representative, 12th District

3223 N. Sheffield Ave, Suite A

Chicago, IL 60657

2/24/16

Dear Ms. Feigenholz,

As Dean of the Niehoff School of Nursing of Loyola University Chicago and as a Nurse Practitioner myself, I am writing to ask you to support HB 421/SB1315 allowing full practice authority for APNs. Nurse Practitioners are highly educated, highly skilled professionals that are asking for the opportunity to practice the full extent of their education and skills. This state is in desperate need of these highly talented professionals. There are many reasons to support this Bill and with respect to your time, I am going to give you an executive summary as to the reasons it is very important to have your support.

 There are over 205,000 Nurse Practitioners (NPs) in the US today

* Currently in the state of Illinois, NPs cannot practice without a collaborative agreement with a physician or health care organization
* 16 other states and DC allow NPs to practice independently, with full practice authority
* 7 other states have a transition to practice period after NP graduation and then allow NPs to practice independently with full practice authority (there is no evidence to show that this transition period is necessary)
* Many NPs leave Illinois to practice in Iowa where they have independent practice authority
* 15,000 new NPs enter the health care workforce each year
* They can be the solution to lack of access to care for millions of patients in the US
* Research clearly demonstrates that NPs provide excellent care that is equal to the care given by physicians
* 85% see patients covered by Medicare and 84% see patients covered by Medicaid
* NPs hold prescriptive privileges in all 50 states and DC
* N**P credibility** - NPs are more than just health care providers; they are mentors, educators, researchers, and administrators. Their involvement in professional organizations and participation in health policy activities at the local, state, national, and international levels helps to advance the role of the NP and ensure that professional standards are maintained.

 **Lower health-care costs** - By providing high-quality care and counseling, NPs can lower the cost of health care for patients. For example, patients who see NPs as their primary care provider often have fewer emergency room visits, shorter hospital stays and lower medication costs.

 **Patient satisfaction -**With almost 916 million visits made to NPs each year, patients report an extremely high level of satisfaction with the care they receive.

 **Primary care shortage solution** - By offering high-quality, cost-effective, patient-centered health care, NPs provide approximately 205,000 solutions to the primary care shortage facing America today.

 (American Association of Nurse Practitioners, 2015)

At Loyola University Chicago’s School of Nursing we graduate over 50 new NPs each year. Every single student we graduate is highly educated and has developed skills that have prepared her/him well to deliver high quality care to the citizens of Illinois. I am asking for your support to allow these highly intelligent, highly skilled professionals to practice independently so that the people of our state can obtain the care they deserve.

Sincerely,



Vicki A. Keough, PhD, APRN-BC, ACNP, FAAN

Dean and Professor, Marcella Neihoff School of Nursing

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