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February 17, 2015

The Honorable G.K. Butterfield
Chair, Congressional Black Caucus
Rayburn House Office Building
Room 2305
Washington DC 20515

Dear Representative Butterfield,

As a professional nursing organization representing more than 150,000 African American registered, licensed vocational/practical nurses, nursing students and retired nurses throughout the United States, the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) is pleased to announce its support for [H.R. 379, The National Nurse Act of 2015](#). Since its inception, improving the health of African Americans through the provision of culturally competent, community-based programs has been the cornerstone of our organization. NBNA members continue to be proven leaders in their respective communities in the delivery of health promotion and disease prevention programs and public health education programs.

HR 379, introduced by Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) and co-led by Congressman Peter King (R-NY), designates the Chief Nurse Officer of the U.S. Public Health Service to be known as the National Nurse for Public Health. This unique title will provide the authority, the impetus, and the recognition needed to capture the public's attention, encourage prevention, and raise awareness of health promotion efforts. This highly skilled and educated nurse will work alongside the U.S. Surgeon General to advocate for enhanced prevention efforts across the country.

Chronic, preventable conditions have costly consequences both in health care dollars and morbidity and are especially prevalent in our nation's under-served communities. During this time of economic uncertainty, now more than ever, nurses must continue to be proactive in the fight against illness and disease. HR 379 helps to keep nursing in the forefront by asking the National Nurse for Public Health to be a visible presence and work to engage nurses and other health professionals to replicate successful health promotion programs in their local communities.

The NBNA supports establishment of a National Nurse for Public Health because we believe that nurses, as the largest and most trusted sector of the healthcare workforce, are well positioned to make important strides in keeping Americans well. We eagerly add the voice of the NBNA to this effort to help bring this important legislation to fruition.

Sincerely,

Deidre Walton, JD, MSN, RN
NBNA President

cc: U.S. Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson
National Nursing Network Organization President Teri Mills RN, MS, CNE

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