

# Historic APRN Legislation Introduced in U.S. Senate

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## **MEDIA CONTACTS:**

Zachary Levine, [zachary.levine@ana.org](mailto:zachary.levine@ana.org)

**SILVER SPRING, MD**—Today, the *Improving Care and Access to Nurses (ICAN) Act* (S.5212) was introduced in the United States Senate by Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR). This landmark piece of legislation, which has been endorsed by more than 160 health care organizations, would remove numerous administrative and practice barriers for advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), thereby improving access to health care for millions of Americans. Fundamentally, the ICAN Act means that APRNs, including nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetists, nurse-midwives, and clinical nurse specialists will be able to care for their patients at the fullest extent of their abilities.

The following statement is attributable to American Nurses Association President Ernest J. Grant, PhD, RN, FAAN:

“The ICAN Act is a significant bill that will eliminate many of the burdensome laws and regulations that have prevented patients from getting access to the kind of timely, evidenced-based care that APRNs are clinically trained and qualified to provide. Allowing APRNs to practice at the top of their license, like they did during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, will help to cultivate the kind of flexibility that modern health care requires. That flexibility will improve patient outcomes and lower costs. And in doing so it will ensure that more individuals, including those in rural and underserved communities, have access to the kind of health care that they deserve.

APRNs have the demonstrated clinical expertise and track record to meet the complex demands of diverse patient populations, respond to public health challenges, and improve health equity. The ICAN Act is an overdue starting point to remove outmoded barriers to practice and hopefully end tiresome debates over hierarchies by placing the needs of patients first. I want to thank Senator Merkley for introducing this bill and for his commitment to nurses and the nursing profession.”

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## **About the American Nurses Association**

The [American Nurses Association](http://www.nursingworld.org) (ANA) is the premier organization representing the interests of the nation's 4.2 million registered nurses. ANA advances the profession by fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting a safe and ethical work environment, bolstering the health and wellness of nurses, and advocating on health care issues that affect nurses and the public. ANA is at the forefront of improving the quality of health care for all. For more information, visit [www.nursingworld.org](http://www.nursingworld.org).