



*National
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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL NURSES SUPPORTS MORE NURSES IN UNDERSERVED SCHOOLS

(Silver Spring, MD, May 11, 2021) -- The National Association of School Nurses (NASN) thanks Rep. Dina Titus (D-Nevada) and Sen. Jon Tester (D-Montana) for their leadership in introducing the Nurses for Under-Resourced Schools Everywhere (NURSE) Act, which would help rural and underserved schools hire more full-time school nurses.

The NURSE Act creates a grant program through the Department of Education to help schools and state agencies cover the cost of hiring more school nurses. The NURSE Act prioritizes grant awards for Title I and underserved schools with high percentages of low-income students, as well as districts with no nurses at all.

"Fundamentally, the NURSE Act is about equity and leveling the field with regard to health disparities and academic readiness," said NASN President Laurie Combe, MN, RN, NCSN. "This is especially true for students in rural and underserved communities where students lack access to a school nurse. NASN applauds Senator Tester and Congresswoman Titus for their leadership in advancing this important legislation, and we urge its speedy adoption."

Schools, districts, and state education agencies would be eligible to apply for these additional resources based on the number of students qualifying for free or reduced-price school meals.

"School nurses have long been a critical health hub for students, managing complex, chronic conditions, detecting early warning signs of mental health issues and intervening to ensure appropriate care, and now navigating through the Covid-19 pandemic by testing, tracking and vaccinating students and school personnel," said NASN Executive Director Donna Mazyck, CAE, MS, RN, NCSN. "We are all aware that prior to the pandemic, schools were woefully understaffed with regard to school nurses. The NURSE Act would provide much needed federal support to strengthen school nursing and ensure that students can access the care they need to remain healthy and ready to learn."



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In addition to NASN, the American Nurses Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Trust for America's Health also endorsed the NURSE Act.

"In the wake of COVID-19, school nurses play a critical role in transitioning students back into the classroom and fostering a safe and healthy learning environment," said Ernest Grant, PhD, RN, FAAN, president of the American Nurses Association. "The NURSE Act acknowledges their vital impact and provides the necessary funds to help address the shortage of school nurses in public elementary and secondary schools. Thank you, Senator Tester and Representative Titus for your commitment to this important legislation."

"The American Academy of Pediatrics is pleased to support the NURSE Act, recognizing the vital role that school nurses play in providing immediate and appropriate care for children," said Lee Savio Beers, MD, FAAP, President of the American Academy of Pediatrics. "An on-site school nurse is crucial to meeting children's needs, especially to address the heightened social, mental, and emotional needs of students and their families as schools prepare to reopen this fall. The NURSE Act would make it easier for schools, especially those in under-resourced and rural areas, to have a school nurse on site. This bill could not come at a more important time. We commend Senator Tester for its introduction and urge its swift passage through Congress."

"Trust for America's Health applauds the introduction of the NURSE Act," said John Auerbach, CEO of Trust for America's Health. "We know children do better in school when they are healthy. Every child deserves a chance to succeed both inside and outside the classroom, and school nurses play a critical role in promoting optimal student health and learning."

About NASN:

The National Association of School Nurses is a non-profit specialty nursing organization, representing school nurses exclusively. NASN has more than 18,000 members and 50 affiliates, including one in the District of Columbia and one serving school nurses overseas. The mission of NASN is to optimize student health and learning by advancing the practice of school nursing. Please visit us at www.nasn.org

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