

March 21, 2024

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
U.S. Senate
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Merkley:

On behalf of the Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) and our nearly 50,000 members, I am writing to express our support for S. 3770, the *Future Advancement of Academic Nursing Act*, which would create a new pathway for additional funding to increase capacity at nursing schools across the country to respond to public health emergencies as well as enhance nursing educational programs.

Nurse staffing levels across the country are in trouble. Burnout, anxiety, depression and other factors have led to many nurses leaving the bedside, while others are leaving the profession altogether. Workplace violence, stressful conditions and high turnover have been contributing to an ongoing nursing shortage for years. While the pandemic presented new challenges for nurses to endure, the staffing shortage was here long before. Some estimates project the current nursing shortage to continue to spread across the country through 2030. Critical investments in the nursing education pipeline must be made to support the health care system and to ensure its ability to provide quality emergency care to patients.

The Future Advancement of Academic Nursing Act would provide a \$1 billion investment for increasing the number of nursing school students and faculty positions at nursing schools across the country. These funds could also be used to modernize facilities and equipment at nursing schools to continue to bring nursing education into the 21st century. This effort is a recognition that we must encourage more young people to go into nursing, and to encourage experienced, highly skilled nurses to become faculty members. By increasing the pipeline for new nurses, the FAAN Act will help address the staffing shortage and thereby ensure our ability to provide high-quality lifesaving care in the future.

As professionals on the frontlines of our nation's health care system, emergency nurses are critical to providing emergency care before, during and after the pandemic. We would like to thank you for introducing this legislation and your leadership on this critical issue. If you have any questions, please contact ENA's Director of Government Relations, Rob Kramer, at 202-465-4756

Sincerely,



Chris Dellinger, MBA, BSN, RN, FAEN
2024 ENA President