



August 15, 2023

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
United States Senate
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Cynthia Lummis
United States Senate
127A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Merkley and Senator Lummis:

AARP, which advocates for the more than 100 million Americans age 50 and older, thanks you for introducing the Improving Care and Access to Nurses (I CAN) Act of 2023 (S. 2418). We share your commitment to expanding access to quality health care and believe this bill addresses several barriers to care in Medicare and Medicaid.

Many Medicare and Medicaid restrictions prevent Advance Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) and other licensed clinicians from performing tasks for which they are educated and highly skilled. For instance, requiring direct physician oversight of certain services often adds extra steps to the process of delivering care, which can add time and expense for patients and family caregivers. This is particularly true in health workforce shortage areas, such as rural areas, where there may be a lack of physicians necessary to order or deliver services.

Updating these rules to reflect current best practices, as described in the 2010 and 2021 National Academy of Medicine *Future of Nursing* reports, would enable Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries to have direct access to APRNs and other licensed clinicians. Doing so would also reduce red tape and improve provider availability and convenience for individuals and their caregivers. We support the I CAN Act's efforts to improve access to services by optimizing the existing health care workforce.

Again, thank you for your bipartisan leadership in addressing consumers' health care access. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or have your staff contact Andrew Scholnick on our Government Affairs team at ascholnick@aarp.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Bill Sweeney".

Bill Sweeney
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs