

June 16, 2010

Senate President Therese Murray
State House, Room 332
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senate President Murray:

As a coalition of home care trade associations and consumer advocacy groups, we are contacting you to express our strong support for Senate Bill 860, *An Act Relative to Home Health Aides*, which is currently in the Senate Committee on Ethics and Rules. As this legislation would improve patient care and cut medical costs to the Commonwealth, we urge that bill go to the Senate floor.

This legislation would refine the Massachusetts Nurse Practice Act to permit appropriate practices of nurse delegation to include medication administered by home health and hospice aides in the home setting. Similar legislation has already been passed and implemented with great success in Washington and Oregon and a "Nurse Delegation" pilot project is currently being conducted in New Jersey. The cost savings realized comes, in part, from both the agency and the state not having to pay for sending a nurse to the home where an aide is able, with supervision and consent, to administer medication. This also represents a more efficient use of a limited nursing workforce at a time when the population is rapidly aging.

Based on the findings in a recent study by the New England Healthcare Institute (NEHI), we believe that this legislation will have no costs to the Commonwealth and will improve cost-efficiency for the healthcare delivery system by improving medication adherence. The NEHI study indicated that patients who deviate from their medication regimen cost the country \$290 billion in avoidable hospitalizations and other related expenses.

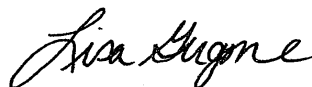
In an effort to personalize the issue and show exactly how this bill would be of benefit, we have enclosed a patient example contained in a statement from Margo Bourne. She is a Home Health Aide Manager with the Visiting Nurse Association of Boston.

We thank you for your consideration of this issue. Please let us know if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,



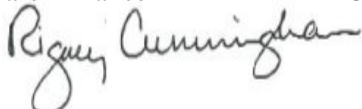
Patricia Kelleher
Executive Director
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Lisa Gurgone
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Rigney Cunningham
Executive Director
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Amy Robins
Massachusetts State Director
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Cc: Senator Frederick E. Berry