



Oncology Nursing Society

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July 26, 2018

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman,
Senate Committee on Health
Education, Labor & Pensions
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member,
Senate Committee on Health,
Education, Labor & Pensions
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Support of S. 693, the Palliative Care Hospice Education and Treatment Act ("PCHETA")

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray:

On behalf of the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS), we want to convey our appreciation of your bipartisan leadership on the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP) to strengthen and improve the nation's health care system to ensure patient access to quality, affordable health care.

ONS writes in support of S. 693, the **Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Treatment Act ("PCHETA")**, legislation to ensure a well-trained palliative care workforce to meet the needs of patients with serious illness, including cancer. The legislation would authorize a program to fund grants for nurse and nurse faculty training and education in palliative care using a "train the trainer" model; direct the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to use existing funds to focus research in palliative care; and disseminate information to the public on the benefits and availability of palliative care. Research clearly shows that palliative care delivered by an interdisciplinary team of professionals, including nurses, improves patient quality of life and reduces cost.

ONS was delighted that on July 23rd the House unanimously passed H.R. 1676, the bipartisan companion "PCHETA" legislation to S. 693. ONS respectfully requests your leadership in prioritizing consideration of S. 693 and shepherding it through the Senate HELP Committee so that it can also be favorably considered by the full Senate. The "PCHETA" bill is a top priority of ONS, and we strongly believe it will help address the current gap in trained palliative care professionals, including those caring for patients with cancer.

ONS is a professional organization of over 39,000 registered nurses and other health care providers dedicated to excellence in patient care, education, research, and administration in oncology nursing. Through our professional community, oncology nurses develop evidence-based education programs and treatment information, advocate for patient care, and seek to improve quality of life and outcomes for cancer patients and their families. Together, ONS and the cancer community seek to reduce the risks, incidence, and burden of cancer by encouraging healthy lifestyles, promoting early detection, and improving the management of cancer symptoms and side effects throughout the disease trajectory.

ONS sincerely thanks you for working together to ensure that patients with serious illnesses such as cancer receive quality palliative care they need to improve their health outcomes and well-being.

If you have any questions or if ONS can serve as a resource on palliative care and oncology nursing, we encourage you to contact Donna (Dede) Sweeney, ONS Director of Government Affairs, at dsweeney@ons.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laura Fennimore".

Laura Fennimore, RN, DNP. NEA-BC
President, Oncology Nursing Society

cc: Senate HELP Committee Members