



ANNA Urges Congress to Pass the Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act (H.R. 618 and S. 131)

The American Nephrology Nurses Association (ANNA) is a nonprofit organization with a membership of more than 6,000 registered nurses and other health care professionals at all levels of practice. ANNA members work in settings such as chronic kidney disease management, peritoneal dialysis, hemodialysis, continuous renal replacement therapy, transplantation, industry, and government and regulatory agencies.

While federal employees are allowed to choose nurse practitioners (NPs) as their primary health care providers under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, they are unable to utilize these same providers to certify and oversee their care for workplace-related injuries. Further, outdated requirements in the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA)—the primary workers' compensation program for all U.S. federal employees—prohibit non-physicians from providing care to federal workers who become injured on the job. The current federal workers' compensation policy, originally enacted in 1916, also fails to recognize worsening nationwide physician shortages, with the U.S. facing a projected shortage of between 37,800 and 124,000 physicians by 2034. Now more than ever, federal legislation is needed to help ensure nearly two million federal employees can access the care they need and deserve.

The Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act

The bipartisan and bicameral legislation was introduced on January 30, 2023, by Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Senator Susan Collins (R-ME), Representative Tim Walberg (R-MI-5), and Representative Joe Courtney (D-CT-2). The legislation would help expand access to care for federal employees by:

- Modernizing the Federal Employees Compensation Act to allow federal employees injured on the job to choose NPs to diagnose medical conditions, certify injury and extent of disability, and oversee treatment and care.
- Improving access to high-quality and cost-effective care for federal employees injured on the job, especially those living in rural and underserved areas who have limited health care options.
- Honoring patient choice and preserving continuity of care by allowing federal employees injured on the job to choose NPs, recognizing that these clinicians may already be their preferred provider and/or the only provider within reach.
- Helping injured federal workers return to work more quickly by expanding the number of providers that can provide timely and high-quality care.

Recommendation: ANNA urges Congress to pass the *Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act* (S. 131 and H.R.618).