



[The National Nurse Act of 2015](#)

[H.R. 379](#) introduced in the House on 1/14/2015 by Reps. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) and Peter King (R-NY) and [S. 1205](#) introduced on 5/6/2015 by Senators Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV).

Bill designates Chief Nurse Officer (CNO) of Public Health Service (PHS) to be additionally known as the National Nurse for Public Health.

Goal is to elevate and enhance position of CNO to bring visibility to the critical role nursing occupies in promoting, protecting, and advancing the nation's health.

CNO position is currently a dual appointment and is shared with the branch of the Health and Human Services that CNO worked in prior to appointment. H.R. 379 elevates position and ranks CNO in parity with uniformed CNOs who serve on the Federal Nurse Council.

Duties and responsibilities currently held by CNO are retained.

CNO/National Nurse for Public Health will:

1. Function alongside Surgeon General and focus on priorities of health promotion, improving health literacy, and decreasing health disparities;
2. Serve as a visible national spokesperson for engaging nurses in leadership, policy, and prevention efforts; and
3. Encourage health professionals to work and/or volunteer with community programs to improve health.
4. Provide guidance and leadership for activities that will increase public safety and emergency preparedness.

Chronic conditions such as cancer, diabetes, and heart disease pose the greatest threat to the health of Americans and to our nation's economy. Nurses play a critical role in prevention and management of these conditions and the work of the CNO/National Nurse for Public Health focusing on prevention will help reduce the occurrence of illness and contain health care costs.

The National Nurse Act of 2015 is simple, pragmatic, and can be implemented as it is written without the request of additional allocations.

This bill has strong bipartisan support in Congress with 87 co-sponsors for H.R. 379 and 4 co-sponsors for S.1205. There are 119 organizations in support including the Case Management Society of America, American Nurses Association, the National Federation of Nurses, and the American Federation of Healthcare Professionals. Five state legislatures (MA, OR, NJ, NY and VT) have overwhelmingly passed resolutions urging Congress to enact this bill.

For more information, visit <http://nationalnurse.org> or contact teri@nationalnurse.org (503-320-2385)