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TO: Chairperson Petrowski and Members of the Senate Transportation and Veterans Affairs Committee

FROM: Gina Dennik-Champion, MSN, RN, MSHA
Executive Director Wisconsin Nurses Association

DATE: January 21, 2016

RE: Support of SB 543 and AB 702 relating to special registration plates associated with nurses, the nursing profession, and other designated groups registration numbers on special registration plates, and making appropriations.

The Wisconsin Nurses Association wants to express our appreciation to you Chairperson Petrowski for scheduling a hearing today on SB 543. We would also like to thank the members of the Senate Transportation and Veterans Affairs Committee for receiving our testimony. SB 543 and the companion bill AB 702 establishes designated special groups for persons interested in obtaining special license plates expressing support for specifically named groups. WNA applauds the inclusion of the nurses and our nursing profession as one of these designated special groups in this legislation.

My name is Gina Dennik-Champion and I am the Executive Director of the Wisconsin Nurses Association. WNA supports efforts that can have a significant impact on the sustainability of a nursing workforce for the future. It was identified in the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development supported 2014 RN Workforce Report, nurses reported that the cost of tuition and fees as the top barrier to additional nursing education across all regions. Recognizing this financial burden, WNA actively supports the concept of providing educational scholarships to nurses using the fees collected through the issuing of a special license plate. WNA believes that SB 543 and AB 702 is a mechanism that can increase the nursing supply, visibility, and pride regarding the nursing profession throughout the state.

WNA is confident that the \$25.00 that is collected from the purchase of each nurse specialty license plate will create a sizeable monetary fund that will contribute to sustaining a prepared nursing workforce for the future. This in turn will support the supply of nurses needed to care for the people of Wisconsin. WNA wishes to extend sincere thanks to Senator Frank Lasee for sponsoring SB 543 and Representative Joel Kitchens for sponsoring AB 702. We ask that SB 543/AB 702 earn the support of all of the members of this Committee, and request a swift passage.

Thank you again Chairperson Petrowski for scheduling a hearing on this bill today.

I am available to answer any questions you may have.

Reference: Wisconsin 2014 Registered Nursing Survey Report, July 2015. Wisconsin Center for Nursing.
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