



## APRN FORUM

To: Senator Stephen Nass, Chair  
Members, Senate Committee on Labor & Regulatory Reform

From: Kimberly Day, MSN, RN, FNP, APNP  
WNA APRN Forum Board Member and  
Gina Dennik -Champion, MSN, RN, MSHA  
WNA Executive Director

Date: Wednesday, February 14, 2018

**Re: Opposition to Senate Bill 665 - Worker's Compensation  
Specifically Creation of a New Government Fee Schedule**

Chairperson Nass and members of the Senate Committee on Labor & Regulatory Reform we are here today on behalf the Wisconsin nursing profession urging you to oppose Senate Bill 665. Thank you sponsoring this public hearing.

My name is Gina Dennik-Champion and I am the Executive Director of the Wisconsin Nurses Association and this is Kimberly Day, who is an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) practicing as a Nurse Practitioner in a primary care clinic Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin.

Our opposition is based on the healthcare profession's experience with government price setting (i.e. fee-schedules) and our fear of the negative impact it could have on patient-worker outcomes – jeopardizing Wisconsin's record of quality care. Kim will provide information regarding her experience in the assessment and treatment of her patients that are recovering from work-related injury.

My name is Kimberly Day, I am a Nationally Board Certified Family Nurse Practitioner. I have been practicing for 18 years. From 2000 to 2012 my practice was in occupational health. I am now in a family practice clinic in rural Fort Atkinson. My background allows me to care for my work-injured patients. In my practice location I have the ability to consult and refer to physicians who specialize in the treatment of workers compensation but this is not the norm. My APRN colleagues who practice in rural Wisconsin find that their patients do not have such access occupational health services. These APRNs receive additional education and training in occupational medicine so that they can safely treat, collaborate with Physical and Occupational Therapists so as a team, we can get our patients back into the workplace.

Thank you Kim, as you can see the nursing profession is often a part of the injured worker's journey from admittance, case management, evaluation, clinical workup and the process of rehabilitation. Often nurses are the principal liaison between the hospital\clinic, insurance company and the employer.

The goal of the nursing profession, as is the entire healthcare profession, is to provide the best patient care, recovery and rehabilitation so that the individual can return safely to his\her occupation, family and hopefully a normal and productive life.

Wisconsin is known for having one of the best state Worker's Compensation systems in the United States. And, while there are organizations that will argue that healthcare provider charges by procedure in the system maybe higher than many other states – Wisconsin's overall costs, better employee return to work timelines and low rates of litigation make our Wisconsin Worker's Compensation one of the best.

The healthcare profession already faces much uncertainty in the area of reimbursement and revenue due to existing government fee-schedules, such as Medicare and Medicaid. When governments are given such easy levers to affect reimbursement, experience shows that rates can be altered by arbitrary decision criteria, which affects the entire healthcare financing model – affecting all of us. History also shows that elected officials at the state and federal levels of government will sometimes set reimbursement lower than the actual cost of providing care. That real world experience is why there is a lack of trust and a lack of support for the creation of a new government run fee-schedule.

We want to share that we support the proposed Administrative Rule changes that are included in this legislative bill. We would like to suggest that future review and amendments to State Statute 102 include the ability of APRNs to assess, treat and manage the care of their injured patient without physician co-signature. The existing requirement can and does result in delays in patient care and treatment.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony on this issue. And, again, on behalf of the nursing profession we urge the Committee to oppose Senate Bill 665.