The Honorable Tony Evers

Governor of Wisconsin

115 East State Capitol

Madison, WI 53707

RE: Please sign SB 394, to increase patient access to psychiatric mental health services delivered by Advanced Practice Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses

Dear Governor Evers,

I am an Advanced Practice Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse, and I am contacting you to ask that you sign SB 394, *The APRN Modernization Act*. SB 394 contains important language that describes the standards of practice and criteria needed to practice as a psychiatric mental health nurse in Wisconsin. My experiences during this COVID-19 pandemic have shown me that there are many more Wisconsinites in need of mental health care and services. The demand for more mental health services has never been so high. Wisconsin data indicates that in February of 2021 36.4% of adults in Wisconsin reported symptoms of anxiety or depression and that there is a lack of mental health services. The 2022 numbers have only increased as Wisconsinites are responding to their emotional crisis using at-risk behaviors that include alcohol, substance abuse, dependency, opioid addiction, anger, and unsafe driving.

I hold an advanced practice nursing degree, national board certification and state certification to practice as a psychiatric mental health provider. My colleagues are practicing throughout Wisconsin and providing services in rural, tribal and those at-risk communities. We provide inpatient and outpatient services both in-person and through telehealth. I am able to assess, diagnose, order and interpret laboratory tests, prescribe and provide care and services for individuals in need of my services. I collaborate with psychiatrists, psychologists, and primary care providers.

For over 20 years, Registered nurses, including APNs, have been identified in the Gallup poll, as the most trusted health care professional. I can tell you, that because of who we are, advanced practice psychiatric mental health nurse, are able to form strong therapeutic relationships with people experiencing mental illnesses, substance use disorders, and other behaviors that put themselves or significant others at risk. My colleagues and I also work to educate patients, families, health care peers, and communities to understand that whole health begins with mental health – actively working to shatter the stigma associated with mental health care and treatment.

SB 394 will promote increase patient access to quality behavioral therapeutic care, and I ask you, Governor Evers, to sign this very important bill.

Thank you