

June 4, 2018

The Honorable Susan Brooks  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1030 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Brooks:

On behalf of the Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) and our more than 43,000 members, I am writing to express our support for H.R. 5329, the *Poison Center Network Enhancement Act*. This important legislation will reauthorize critical resources for the national toll-free poison control hotline and the 55 poison control centers across the country.

As you know, accidental poisonings remain a critical concern in the United States to this day. In 2016, the nation's poison control centers received 2.2 million calls from people who came into contact with potentially dangerous substances, which averages about once every 14 seconds. These centers provide a critical resource to the population, answering calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They provide expert medical advice regarding exposure to numerous substances – including prescription opioids and illegal drugs, household cleaners, animal bites and stings, and pesticides. These centers have saved the lives of countless children, and it is imperative that Congress continue to support their critical mission.

The *Poison Center Network Enhancement Act (H.R. 5329)* takes important steps to reauthorize the Poison Center Program through 2023. In addition, it makes an important clarification that poison centers have an important role to play in planning for public health emergency preparedness and response. This important legislation will ensure that families, especially those in rural or underserved areas, have access to real-time expert medical assistance in the event of a poisoning, whether intentional or accidental. This access could mean the difference between life and death for many.

As professionals on the frontlines of our nation's health care system, emergency nurses are critical to providing lifesaving emergency care, including to patients who have been exposed to poisons. We would like to thank you for introducing this legislation and your leadership on this critical issue. If you have any questions, please contact ENA's Chief Government Relations Officer, Richard Mereu, at 202-741-9373.

Sincerely,



Jeff Solheim, MSN, RN, CEN, TCRN, CFRN, FAEN, FAAN  
2018 ENA President