



**National League
for Nursing**

September 10, 2008

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chair
Committee on Finance
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kent Conrad
Chair
Committee on Budget
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairmen Baucus and Conrad:

The National League for Nursing (NLN) commends your leadership in introducing S. 3408, the ***Comparative Effectiveness Research Act of 2008***. S. 3408 signals a national commitment to better health, delivering measurable improvements, narrowing the health inequalities gap, and potentially lowering health care costs for everyone in our nation. Comparative effectiveness (CE) research promises to establish fundamental principles for helping society become more fully engaged in health care. As scholar educators, the NLN advocates rigorous evaluation, as well as the production and use, of unbiased information on the effectiveness of treatments to achieve the best clinical outcomes, including determining the best care possible for managing and preventing illness.

In order to maintain scientific standards and attempt to generate reliable, unbiased information, the NLN strongly suggests that the proposed Health Care Comparative Effectiveness Research Institute established under S. 3408 draw on the guidance and expertise of the full range of health care clinicians – including nurses – who are instrumental in promoting cost-effective, quality care. To exclude nursing in the composition of the Institute's Board of Governors will not allow the building of an environment to meet the needs of 21st century health care demands gained from broad-based, interdisciplinary partnership, work, and perspectives. Restricting participation of who has influence on health policymaking unintentionally diminishes the potential that comparative effectiveness research holds. And too, most importantly, absent the input and research of nursing professionals' knowledge and skills, the NLN contends that a disservice to patients and public would accrue.

With more than 1,200 nursing schools and health care agencies, some 27,000 individual members comprising nurses, educators, administrators, public members, and 18 constituent leagues, the NLN is the premier organization dedicated to excellence in nursing education that prepares the nursing workforce to meet the needs of our diverse populations.

The NLN is eager to work with you and your colleagues in developing a CE research infrastructure as a vital first step toward making health care informed and sound across our nation. As general secretary of the United Kingdom's Royal College of Nursing, from June 2001 – January 2007, I acquired insight into the establishment and operation of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), perhaps the best known example of a body that conducts CE research. Do not hesitate to call on me as S. 3408 proceeds through the legislative process.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Beverly Malone", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Beverly Malone, PhD, RN, FAAN
Chief Executive Officer