December 10, 2018

Alex Azar  
Secretary  
US Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20201

RE: Report on Reforming America’s Healthcare System through Choice and Competition

Dear Mr. Azar:

The American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA) would like to thank you for the remarkable message the new report titled “Reforming America’s Healthcare System through Choice and Competition” sends to policymakers, allied health professionals (including CRNAs and other non-physician healthcare professionals) and for the millions of patients served by these qualified providers, about the need to fully utilize all healthcare professionals to ensure patient access to the widest possible spectrum of high quality, safe and affordable healthcare options.

The AANA applauds the report’s recommendation to encourage state governments to remove barriers to practice and allow all healthcare providers to practice to the top of their license and skill set. We believe broadening scope of practice laws is a positive first step in our shared commitment to promote healthcare choice and competition across the United States. However, we believe there are still administrative and regulatory barriers to the use of CRNA services that are not mentioned in the report. Removal of barriers such as physician supervision of CRNA anesthesia services, use of cost-effective models in healthcare delivery such as non-medically directed anesthesia services performed by CRNAs, inclusion of the strategic consideration of the role of anesthesia in enhanced recovery after surgery protocol as an innovative healthcare delivery model and appropriate enforcement of the federal provider nondiscrimination law will help promote competition and choice while reducing costs in the healthcare system.

CRNAs are vital to resolving the challenges facing our nation’s healthcare system and the AANA is firmly committed to working with the agency and other healthcare stakeholders to help achieve our common goals of promoting choice and competition, increasing access to the highest quality healthcare, reducing regulatory burdens on providers, and making healthcare more affordable for all Americans. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact the AANA Senior Director of Federal Government Affairs, Ralph Kohl, at 202-741-9080 or rkohl@aanadc.com.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

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