July 6, 2023

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy                    The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Speaker                                          Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives           United States House of Representatives

**RE: H.R. 618/S. 131, the Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act**

Dear Speaker McCarthy and Minority Leader Jeffries:

The National Rural Health Association (NRHA) writes in support of House passage for H.R. 618/S. 131, the *Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act*. This legislation would allow nurse practitioners (NP) and physician assistants (PA) to diagnose, treat, and provide care for federal employees who are injured at work, consistent with state scope of practice. In fact, most states already authorize NPs to provide this care for non-federal employees.

NRHA is a non-profit membership organization with more than 21,000 members nationwide that provides leadership on rural health issues. Our membership includes every component of rural America's health care, including rural community hospitals, critical access hospitals, doctors, nurses, and patients. We provide leadership on rural health issues through advocacy, communications, education, and research.

NRHA is supportive of this legislation as NPs and PAs are common primary care providers in rural communities. According to MedPAC, in 2018 advanced practice registered nurses (APRN) and PAs accounted for a third of all primary care clinicians treating Medicare beneficiaries nationwide. In rural communities, their presence is closer to half of the primary care clinicians. Because of the significant presence of NPs and PAs, and the quality of care they provide, NRHA urges swift passage of this legislation. This commonsense bill will ensure increased access to needed services in our rural areas.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation. If you have questions, please contact Zach Schulz (zschulz@ruralhealth.us).

Sincerely,

Alan Morgan
Chief Executive Officer
National Rural Health Association