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March 23, 2020

The Honorable Roy Cooper
Governor of North Carolina
20301 Mall Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Dear Governor Cooper:

On behalf of the North Carolina Nurses Association, we want to thank you for your leadership in recent days as our state navigates the COVID-19 pandemic. We also appreciate the contributions of Secretary Cohen and her team during this challenging time. Our association and nurses across the state are committed to working with you and the Secretary to do whatever we can to keep the residents of North Carolina healthy and strong and to be there to care for them if they become ill. Our members have been preparing and are ready to do their part, but it's time for the residents of the state to work together in another level of preparation. **NCNA asks that you strengthen controls over social distancing and implement mandatory shelter in place.**

Healthcare providers and experts across this state and nation are calling on more aggressive measures immediately to slow the spread of the virus. Nurses are significantly concerned about the short supply of PPE and other equipment, as well as the impact on the workforce when providers begin to get ill. The situation will be dire if we do not do everything possible to slow the spread of the virus. Hospitals, health systems, primary care offices and others are already utilizing every measure at their disposal to reduce the spread and conserve equipment but we fear it will not be enough.

The North Carolina Nurses Association urges you to implement the more aggressive use of social distancing and move quickly to a shelter-in-place directive for all North Carolina residents and visitors. We understand concerns about the ongoing availability of essential resources, so we support this decision with appropriate exceptions for essential businesses and other critical infrastructure, including childcare for the healthcare workforce and other essential workers. NCNA also encourages you, other state agencies and licensing boards to explore the utilization of all available measures to open up maximum flexibility for full utilization of the healthcare workforce.

We know that implementing shelter in place is a difficult decision and share concerns about the impact of this pandemic on our economy. However, the sooner action is taken to move us to shelter-in-place, the more capacity nurses, other providers, and healthcare facilities will have to handle a surge in patients. Quick action will save lives. There is nothing more important to us than saving lives.

Please call on NCNA if we may assist you in any way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dennis A. Taylor".

Dennis Taylor, DNP, ACNP-BC, NEA-BC
President, North Carolina Nurses Association

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tina C. Gordon".

Tina C. Gordon, MPA, CAE, FACHE
CEO, North Carolina Nurses Association