December 18th, 2017

United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of National Nurses United, the largest union of registered nurses in the United States, we urge you to vote against the tax bill when it comes to a vote this week. The final text of the tax bill, as released on Friday, December 15th 2017, would drastically increase economic inequality and endanger healthcare for millions of Americans – hurting our patients and hurting our country.

NNU represents 150,000 registered nurses in hospitals and clinics across the United States. Registered Nurses work with patients at the bedside every day. We care for the wealthiest Americans, the poorest Americans, and everyone in between. In the process of providing patient care, we see the devastating impacts of poverty, income and wealth inequality, the lack of health insurance, and the inability to pay exorbitant out-of-pocket costs when patients are insured, on the health and wellness of our patients. We also see the critical importance of entitlement programs that allow patients to access healthcare, feed their families, send their children to school, and survive when living in poverty.

The GOP tax bill would continue to increase economic inequality across the United States. It would permanently slash taxes for the richest individuals and large corporations, while any reductions in taxes for working class Americans would expire within a few years. Under this bill, working class and poor Americans would quickly pay more taxes while the wealthiest Americans pay far less.

In addition, according to the Congressional Budget Office, the tax bill will lead to more people—more than 13 million people within a decade-- being uninsured and higher premiums for those buying individual health insurance policies. These newly uninsured will be added to the currently 28 million people in this country without health insurance, and the tens of millions more who have insurance but whose deductibles and copayments are so high they cannot afford to use it.

In slashing taxes for the rich, the bill will drastically increase the deficit – which will undoubtedly be used by some in Congress to justify a continued attack on Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and other necessary social programs.
The GOP tax plan will increase income inequality in the United States, and prevent tens of millions of patients from getting the quality, therapeutic care they need, when they need it.

On behalf of registered nurses across this country, we implore you to vote against this bill.

Sincerely,

Deborah Burger, RN  
President, NNU

Jean Ross, RN  
President, NNU