

WASHINGTON, DC - May 15, 2009 - The Visiting Nurse Associations of America (VNAA) announces Congressmen Steve Kagen (D-WI) and Lee Terry (R-NE) as this year's recipients of the VNAA Legislators of Year Award.

"Congressmen Kagen and Terry are most deserving of the VNAA Legislators of the Year Award. They both emerged as strong advocates for home and community-based care as lead sponsors of VNAA's workforce bill, the Home Healthcare Nurse Promotion Act," stated Andy Carter, President and CEO of the VNAA.

The Home Healthcare Nurse Promotion (HHNP) Act would support home healthcare agencies who serve as safety-net providers in their communities through recruitment and retention programs to ensure the elderly and most vulnerable citizens have access to high-quality care and live as independently as possible within their own homes.

"I am honored to receive such a prestigious award from the VNAA," stated U.S. Congressman Lee Terry of Nebraska. "The VNA in Omaha has an active presence and I have seen first hand the significant contributions VNAs make to communities across my state and our country. VNAs have a rich history of providing skilled and compassionate nursing care to patients, enabling them to remain within the comfort of their own homes. The role of the VNAs will continue to grow as our aging population increases and I remain committed to do what I can do ensure their continued impact on patient health and well-being," added Congressman Terry, 2nd District of Nebraska.

"I am honored and sincerely grateful to be named as one of the legislators of the year by the Visiting Nurse Associations of America, stated Congressman Steve Kagen, MD, of Wisconsin. "One of the great lessons I have learned as a practicing physician is that the best healthcare is delivered closest to home and I appreciate the hard work home healthcare nurses do everyday," Congressman Kagen added.

Congressmen Kagen, Board Certified in Internal Medicine, Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, and Diagnostic Laboratory Immunology, has lived with a nurse all his life--his mother is a nurse specializing in infection control; his wife and daughter are also both RNs.

"We cannot heal patients without a doctor and nurse in the patient's room and I deeply believe we need doctors and nurses in the room to heal our healthcare system in this nation. I am working hard to be the voice of our patients in Congress as we begin to move our country in a new direction. I am proud to have introduced the Home Health Care Nurse Promotion Act along with my colleague Lee Terry and I am so honored to join him in accepting this award. Working together we will accomplish our goal and build a better nation and a better future for all of us," stated Congressman Kagen, MD, named as one of the "Best Doctors in America" by Wisconsin physicians.

To learn more about the Legislator of the Year Award or other award recipients, go to the VNAA Website: www.vnaa.org. Bios and photos are available now. To view award videos,

check back on May 18

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About VNAA

The VNAA is located at 900 19th Street, NW, Suite 200 in Washington, DC and is the official national association for nonprofit, community-based Visiting Nurse Agencies (VNAs) and home healthcare agencies (HHAs), who care for and treat approximately 4 million patients each year. The nation's network of VNAs and HHAs share a nonprofit mission to provide cost-effective and compassionate home healthcare to some of the nation's most vulnerable individuals, particularly the elderly and individuals with disabilities. The VNAA has a wide range of resources available on its Website about home healthcare and questions to ask when considering home healthcare. Visit www.vnaa.org to locate a VNA near you.

