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Contacts:

ANA-Illinois & ISAPN: Susan Y. Swart 312-331-0663; [susan@sysconsultingsolutions.com](mailto:susan@sysconsultingsolutions.com)

ISMS: John Maszinski 312-608-3620; [johnmaszinski@isms.org](mailto:johnmaszinski@isms.org)

IHA: Danny Chun 847-736-0108; [dchun@team-iha.org](mailto:dchun@team-iha.org)

## **Health Care Organizations Speak Out Against Legal Challenge to Stay-at-Home Order**

*Doctors, Nurses and Hospitals Submit Amicus Brief Supporting Governor's Executive Order*

Chicago, Ill. -- Today the American Nurses Association (ANA) – Illinois, the Illinois Society for Advanced Practice Nursing (ISAPN), the Illinois Health and Hospital Association (IHA) and the Illinois State Medical Society (ISMS) submitted an amicus brief in the legal case challenging Governor Pritzker's stay-at-home executive order. The organizations are speaking out against the Clay County Circuit Court's April 27 temporary restraining order, which prevents the administration from enforcing the extended stay-at-home order against the plaintiff who filed the lawsuit. While this ruling may only apply to one individual, it opens the door to similar lawsuits from others. (The *amicus brief* was submitted to the Fifth District Appellate Court in Mt. Vernon.)

Our organizations strongly believe that the public health measures taken by the Governor's executive order are needed to save lives by slowing the spread of COVID-19. Blocking the measures, which are based on the guidance and recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, would have a devastating impact on our most vulnerable populations, not to mention the continuation of consistent exposure of patients and healthcare professionals to the coronavirus.

"To paraphrase the Governor, Illinoisans are in danger as a result of this circuit court decision," said ISMS President Robert W. Pantan, M.D. He added, "We know this isn't easy for anyone. But blocking the most important steps we've taken to fight this pandemic will only result in more people getting sick, and dying."

"Frontline healthcare workers, including nurses, physicians, and many others, have placed their lives on the line to care for those infected with the coronavirus, and the people of Illinois have sacrificed to help curb the spread. The action taken by the circuit court risks making those sacrifices for nothing," said ANA-Illinois President Elizabeth Aquino, PhD, RN.

"The Governor's executive order and critical actions taken by the state under the guidance of IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike have helped 'flatten the curve', substantially mitigating the spread of the coronavirus and preventing many deaths," said IHA President and CEO A.J. Wilhelmi. "Undoing the order will only increase the stress on already burdened hospitals and

health systems and dedicated healthcare professionals, jeopardizing the availability of life-saving care to Illinoisans.”

As of April 29, the Illinois Department of Public Health reported more than 50,000 cases of COVID-19, with a death toll of more than 2,200, including a one-day record high 144 deaths on Tuesday. These kinds of numbers have not been seen in Illinois since the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic. Numerous models show that without slowing down and reducing the peak surge of COVID-19 cases, as has occurred under the stay-at-home order, the state’s healthcare delivery system would be overwhelmed with severe shortages of healthcare staff, ICU beds, ventilators and personal protective equipment.

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The American Nurses Association-Illinois (ANA-Illinois) is the premier organization representing the interests of the state’s 180,000+ registered nurses. ANA-Illinois advances the nursing profession by working to improve the health standards and the availability of health care services for all people in Illinois and fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting a safe and ethical work environment, and advocating on health care issues that affect nurses and the public. For more information, go to [www.ana-illinois.org](http://www.ana-illinois.org).

The Illinois Society for Advanced Practice Nursing (ISAPN) is professional association dedicated to promoting and advocating for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses. The association represents the interest of 14,000+ advanced practice registered nurses in Illinois. ISAPN membership encompasses all four specialty areas of practice: nurse midwives, nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists and nurse anesthetists. For more information, go to [www.isapn.org](http://www.isapn.org).

Founded in 1840, the Illinois State Medical Society is a professional membership association representing Illinois physicians in all medical specialties, and their patients, statewide. Dr. Pantan practices ophthalmology in Elmwood Park. For more information, visit [www.isms.org](http://www.isms.org).

The Illinois Health and Hospital Association (IHA), with offices in Chicago, Naperville, Springfield, and Washington, D.C., advocates for Illinois' more than 200 hospitals and nearly 40 health systems as they serve their patients and communities. IHA members provide a broad range of services—not just within their walls, but across the continuum of healthcare and in their communities. For more information, go to [www.team-iha.org](http://www.team-iha.org).