

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**ANA-Ohio Condemns Political Advertisement Exploiting Childhood Trauma and Abuse**

Professional Nursing Association Raises Concerns About the Potential Harm to Survivors of Abuse and Calls for Greater Responsibility in Public Discourse

Ohio – [October 2026] — The American Nurses Association-Ohio (ANA-Ohio) today issued a statement strongly condemning a political advertisement released by the Vivek Ramaswamy gubernatorial campaign featuring the estranged biological mother of Dr. Amy Acton. Personal attacks have no place in political campaigns.

As a professional nursing association committed to advocacy, public health, and the well-being of Ohioans, ANA-Ohio believes using deeply personal childhood trauma in political advertising raises serious ethical concerns that extend far beyond any individual candidate or political campaign.

"This is politics gone wrong," said Rebecca M. Patton, DNP, RN, CNOR, FAAN, President of ANA-Ohio. "We find this advertisement deeply offensive. There is no place in political discourse for the exploitation of childhood trauma, domestic violence, or sexual abuse. These are profoundly serious experiences that can have lifelong consequences for survivors. To use someone's traumatic experiences as political ammunition is unacceptable."

Nurses are often on the front lines of identifying, caring for, and advocating on behalf of individuals experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, and neglect. Through their professional practice, nurses understand the importance of trauma-informed care, protecting vulnerable individuals, and creating environments where survivors feel safe seeking help and sharing their experiences.

ANA-Ohio is particularly concerned about the potential impact of this advertisement on children who may be experiencing abuse in their own households. "When a child experiencing abuse sees a survivor's traumatic history publicly questioned, minimized, or weaponized, what message does that send?" Patton continued. "We must consider the child who is afraid to speak up, the teenager who fears they will not be believed, and the adult survivor who has spent years healing. Public messages like these risk reinforcing the very fear, shame, and silence that prevent victims from seeking help. The potential consequences could be long-lasting."

ANA-Ohio believes that political campaigns and public leaders have a responsibility to recognize the broader impact of their messaging, particularly when addressing experiences involving violence, abuse, and trauma. Political disagreements are an



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expected part of the democratic process; however, the association believes that exploiting personal trauma crosses an important ethical boundary.

"We recognize that individuals who have neither personally experienced nor professionally cared for survivors of abuse may not fully understand the devastating and lasting impact of these experiences," Patton added. "We would welcome the opportunity to meet with Mr. Ramaswamy and have a meaningful conversation about the realities of domestic violence, childhood sexual abuse, and trauma. Nurses have a unique perspective to offer, and we believe education and dialogue are essential to preventing further harm."

ANA-Ohio unequivocally condemns the advertisement and what the association believes it represents: the exploitation of personal trauma for political gains. The association calls for greater sensitivity, accountability, and respect for survivors in public discourse.

ANA-Ohio emphasizes that this statement is not a political endorsement and should not be construed as one. ANA-Ohio has not endorsed any candidate in the 2026 Ohio gubernatorial election. This statement is not an endorsement of Dr. Amy Acton, nor is it a recommendation for any candidate. Rather, it reflects the association's professional and ethical concerns about the content of the advertisement and its potential impact on survivors of abuse, particularly vulnerable children.

"Our responsibility as nurses is to advocate for the health, safety, and dignity of every individual," Patton concluded. "That responsibility does not change with political affiliation. Childhood trauma is not a political talking point. Survivors deserve compassion, dignity, and respect. We must do better."

About the American Nurses Association–Ohio (ANA-Ohio):

The American Nurses Association–Ohio (ANA-Ohio) is the trusted professional registered nurses' association dedicated to promoting excellence in nursing practice, fostering high standards of nursing care, and advocating for the rights and interests of nurses across Ohio. Through education, advocacy, leadership, resources, and support, ANA-Ohio empowers nurses to improve health care.

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