

American Nurses Association Membership Assembly 2024

By: Sandy Foley, DNP, MSN, RN



The day before the Membership Assembly, NJ nurses, along with more than 500 nurses from across the country participated in ANA's Hill Day meeting with their members of Congress to advance ANA's federal priorities. During this event, nurses engaged with their Congress members, with the aim of advocating for nurses and the citizens that we serve. The ANA federal priorities were: Restricting Mandatory Overtime for Nurses, Nurse Faculty Shortage Reduction Act (H.R. 7002, S. 2815), Improving Care and Access to Nurses (ICAN) Act (S. 2418, H.R. 2713), and Protect Timely Access to Quality Nursing Care in LTC Facilities.

The Annual American Nurses Association (ANA) Membership Assembly (ANA) was scheduled on June 28-29, 2024, in Washington, DC. The ANA MA is comprised of ANA members who are representatives from its constituent member organizations/State Nurses Associations (C/SNAs), Individual Member Division (IMD), affiliated organizations (OAs), or members of the ANA Board of Directors. You would have been proud of the highly motivated and dedicated representation from the New Jersey State Nurses Association (NJSNA) at the ANA MA 2024.

The NJSNA's ANA MA 2024 attendees were:

- Chief Executive Officer CEO, Judy Schmidt, DHA, MSN, RN

- NJSNA elected representative to the ANA Membership Assembly:
- NJSNA President – Sandra Foley, DNP, MSN, RN
- NJSNA President-Elect, Institute for Nursing Chair– Margaret Daingerfield, EDD, RN, CNE
- NJSNA member Region 3, Norma Rodgers-Frink, BSN, RN, CCRA, ACRP-PM, RP
- NJSNA President-Elect Region 6, Sheila Caldwell, BSN, RN, CSN, FNASN



ANA MA Day 1

As the governing and official voting body of the American Nurses Association, the Membership Assembly gathered as a forum to identify, discuss and determine the association's positions on key issues for nurses and the nursing profession. These discussions are in the form of a dialogue forum that had been previously selected by the ANA Board of Directors with input from state constituent members.

The first of three-dialogue forum was concerning the mental health of nurses and the stigma that surrounds seeking assistance. This stigma can impact nursing licensure and difficulty when seeking employment. We discussed ways to break down these barriers.

The second forum discussion centered on proposing actions to ensure that all healthcare providers, including regis-

tered nurses, are well-prepared to deliver top-quality care to military veterans receiving community care outside the Veterans Health Administration.

The third dialogue forum updating the ANA Code of Ethics with interpretive statements. A committee has been meeting to discuss the revision that will be published in 2025.

President Mensik Kennedy spoke fervently about the disturbing topic of violence in the workplace against all healthcare workers. She empathized ANA's legislative stance regarding this topic and the need for advocacy in all states. In addition, she reiterated the need for combatting and confronting racism in nursing and the fact that there are monies to be allocated to the state constituents for work regarding racism in nursing.

Lastly, ANA Interim CEO Angela Beddoe so eloquently spoke about the future of ANA and its current robust initiatives. She is passionate, dynamic and committed to meeting the association's needs, inspiring confidence in the membership and leaders.

Please follow this link to get the full update on ANA Hill Day #1

<https://www.nursingworld.org/news/news-releases/2024/ana-membership-assembly-deliberates-key-issues-affecting-nurses-and-the-nursing-profession>

ANA MA Day 2

Racial Reckoning Think Tank

ANA Enterprise CNO Debbie Hatmaker, addressed the MA regarding the recent development of the Racial Reckoning Think Tank. The newly established think tank has been established along with other ethnic minority nursing associa-

tions. A collaboration between the nursing associations will allow for a robust conversation and future initiatives.

Emerging Issues

Assembly representatives addressed new business, approving motions related to the ethics and transparency of financial investments and developing a policy to evaluate all external partners for alignment with internal ethics.

The Assembly did not approve a motion for the ANA Board of Directors

to endorse a candidate in the 2024 U.S. presidential election.

ANA 2024-2025 Election Results:

President Jennifer Mensik Kennedy, PhD, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN, Oregon Nurses Association. She will serve as the ANA 38th President.

Representatives elected new officers and board members: Amanda Oliver Secretary of Illinois; Director-at-Large Edward Briggs, Florida Nurses Association; Director-at-Large Ahnyel Burkes,

Louisiana State Nurses Association; and Director-at-Large, Staff Nurse Josephine Agyei, ANA-New York.

Elected to serve on the Nominations and Elections Committee are:

Mavis Mesi, Colorado Nurses Association; Vinciya Pandian, Maryland Nurses Association; and Kimberly Velez, ANA-New York

Please follow this link to get the full update on ANA Hill Day #2

<https://www.nursingworld.org/news/news-releases/2024/ana-membership-assembly-day-2/>

A Summary of the ANA's Membership Assembly Discussion: ANA's 2024 Political Engagement

By: Margaret A Farrell Daingerfield, EdD, RN, CNE



NJSNA advocating for the nation's nurses on Capitol Hill.

of all political stripes in Congress. We meet with elected officials on these issues every day to make sure they understand ANA's priorities. While we may disagree on certain issues, we remain steadfast to not be disagreeable – the person you disagree with on one issue may be your biggest champion on another in the future. (retrieved from <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/advocacy/federal/ana-advises-federal-agencies/>)

Political engagement begins with grassroots advocacy. With strength in numbers, nurses can channel energy into effective action. This presentation provided an overview of a variety of initiatives and resources to support advocacy efforts to improve the nursing environment and the healthcare of our citizens.

1. RNAction.org is ANA's grassroots community. With links on how to Engage, Capitol Beat, Latest News, the RN Action Center and Regulatory Action, this site provides a wealth of information on advancing nursing priorities on

Capitol Hill. Visit the RNAction Center (<https://p2a.co/ywz5JtS>) to see a 2024 Hill Day photo of NJSNA nurses under the Nurse Overtime and Patient Safety Act H.R. 7546/S. 3860 section.

2. The Federal Advocacy Library provides access to letters to Congress and other nursing coalition letters. The Legislative Advocacy site states: On the Legislative Advocacy side, to be successful with passing and implementing our policy priorities, ANA remains nonpartisan and works diligently to form relationships with elected officials and staff

3. ANA's Hill Day invites nurses from around the country to advocate in person in Washington D.C. This year nearly 500 nurse attendees, including over 80 nursing students held 353 meetings on the Hill. Nurses advocated for the following:

- Restricting Mandatory Overtime for Nurses (S. 3860, H.R. 7546)
- Improving Care and Access to Nurses (ICAN) Act (S. 2418, H.R. 2713)

- c. Nurse Faculty Shortage Reduction Act (S. 2815, H.R. 7002)
 - d. Protect Timely Access to Quality Nursing Care in LTC Facilities (Support the CMS recently issued LTC Staffing Final Rule).
4. Get Out the Vote (GOTV) educates members and nurses through email and text reminders, candidate scorecards, and National Convention information. This initiative includes attending numerous smaller events to engage with multiple interest groups within each party and providing visibility as part of ANAs nonpartisan presidential engagement process.
 5. Partnering with Vot-ER. Vot-ER is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization working to integrate civic engagement into healthcare. Healthcare professionals can simply wear their free badge backer, ask about voter registration, and have patients scan the QR code for effortless voter registration.
 6. <https://nursesvote.org/>. This site provides a link to the Voting Center to register to vote, locate candidates and elected officials, and other voter information. For state specific voting and election details, visit the site to access a US map and click on our state to view important election dates and voting information. See <https://nursesvote.org/state/new-jersey/>
 7. 50 years of ANA PAC Campaign. The campaign highlights the history of ANA PAC and the successful legislation the PAC has helped pass. It emphasizes

key nursing issues and prioritizes issues when deciding how to give ahead of a contentious election cycle. Its donor party designation allows donors to designate a specific party that their money will be used to support and allows membership a greater degree of control over their money.

This valuable presentation emphasized the importance of continuously advancing the nursing profession—no matter who is in office—and of pursuing multiple avenues to affect change: regulatory, legislative, grassroots, etc. There are 535 voting members of congress so engagement across the aisle is essential. Key nursing champions come from both parties. Remember, When Nurses Speak, Washington Listens. ■

American Nurses Association Hill Day: A Day of Professional Advocacy

By: Linda J. Hassler, DNP, RN, GCNS-BC, CNE, FGNA, INPAC Chair



On June 27, 2024, over 500 nurses and nursing students from across America attended the American Nurses Association annual Hill Day in Washington, DC, at the Grand Hyatt Hotel and the Capital Complex. The event started with breakfast, a welcome from ANA President Jennifer Kennedy and a review of the agenda for the day.

Once a member signed up for this free event, nurses were sent an email with Hill Day YouTube videos (<https://www.youtube.com/@nursesmatter>) of four key issues to help prepare each nurse for the upcoming

legislator meetings. The Congressional and Political Advocacy Directors from ANA, who presented these videos, were present at Hill Day and gave us a synopsis of the issues to be discussed. We also had time to comment on the importance of supporting the bill. ANA provided “Facts at a Glance” for the following three bills and one final rule: Nurse Faculty Shortage Reduction Act (HR 7002; S2825); Nurse Overtime and Patient Safety Act (HR2713; S2418); Improving Care and Access to Nurses (ICAN) (HR2713; S2418); and the Center for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) Long Term Care Staffing Final Rule.

Next, each nurse was given an individualized schedule and link to the online “Soapbox” app. Participants were put into teams of 6-7 people from their state with a Team Leader, so we were not visiting the legislators on our own. The schedule included which legislator we were meeting with, where their

office was and what committees they are currently serving on.

After we reviewed our schedules and met our team members, President Kennedy conducted a “Fireside Chat” with Oregon Representative Suzanne Bonamici, who is the co-chair of the Congressional Nursing Caucus. This Caucus is a group of Senators and Representatives from both sides (bipartisan) who are friends of nursing, support nurses and advocate for nurses. In New Jersey, there are no Senators in the Caucus, but we have three representatives who are members: Representatives Pallone, Pascrell and Smith. A notable member of the Caucus is Senator Bernie Sanders from Vermont, who recently supported the RWJUH-New Brunswick nurses.

Representative Bonamici gave nurses several tips on how to speak with the legislators. One important suggestion was to tell them “Your story” of how the topic affects you as a

nurse and encouraged us to speak to the bill from a personal perspective. I think this was akin to preparing an “Elevator Speech” when you might meet the CNO at your facility.

At this point, it was time to go to our meetings wearing our pins Registered Nurse/Registered Voter. There were buses that took us from the hotel to the Capital Complex. Many of us changed into our walking shoes as we had to go to four different meetings across several different buildings on this 80-degree day. Thankfully, there was a map of the Capital area on the back of our schedule and the buildings were connected by underground tunnels! Our NJ Team 4 was led by Region 6 President Sheila Caldwell, and consisted of 6 members from different areas of nursing. When we went into a meeting, Sheila would introduce the team, then introduce the bill and called on whomever could speak to the bill: Niti Patel, Namrata Jane and Violet Mones spoke about ICAN, Kyle Abinales and Linda Cagliano spoke to the Overtime bill, Violet and I spoke to Nurse Faculty Shortage Reduction Act and I spoke

to the LTC Staffing Rule. Although after a few meetings, we added personal thoughts on several issues. We did this presentation four times as we had meetings at 11am, 1pm, 2pm and 3pm. Unfortunately for NJ Team 4, we met with the Health Legislative Aides as the legislators were not available. However, when we met with them, they were very attentive, took notes and Sheila gave them the four ANA “Facts at a Glance” flyers to review with their legislator. After each meeting, we went on our “Soapbox” app and completed a survey about the meeting and uploaded any pictures. We also had lunch in the cafeteria, where we rested our feet and voices for the afternoon meetings.

From all this walking (I logged 11,363 steps), I developed a blister and stopped at the Health Office in the Rayburn Building. I was met by an RN who asked me about my purpose of visiting and I said “to advocate for nursing”. She was very impressed and informed me of the services they offer from Band-Aids to EpiPens to CPR. They have several “Go Bags” that they can take anywhere

in the building to care for legislators, staff or visitors. She provided me with a Band-Aid and gave me two more, that I then gave to another team member.

By the end of the day, NJ Team 4 were all fast friends and were ready to get back on the bus. Some of the nurses stayed for the ANA Membership Assembly on the following Friday and Saturday. We all agreed to send follow-up emails to the legislators and their aides. This was my second Hill Day, and I must say, it felt GREAT to be advocating for our wonderful profession and the people we care for.

If this article spurred you on to become active, please join NJSNA on one of our committees: the Legislative Committee, which reviews NJ bills and meets with legislators to either support or lobbies for changes to the bills; or the Interested Nurses Political Action Committee (INPAC) which reviews and endorses a candidate for office, supports candidates at fundraising events, and encourage nurses interested in running for office in NJ. ■

Membership Assembly Lunchtime Discussion

Sheila Caldwell, BSN, RN, CSN, FNASN

At the Membership Assembly, we had the opportunity to attend a lunchtime discussion. The discussion that I attended was titled, “Nurses Strengthening the Safety Net”. This discussion focused on the work nurses are doing throughout the country to improve the health of people who live in underserved and under-resourced communities.

The discussion highlighted what some advanced practice registered nurses are doing in the communities that they serve along with individual patients.

There was an APRN from Virginia, who spoke about how she obtained a grant to bring additional community-based health services to the community center in her area. She spoke about how she was able to employ a few of residents and partner with organizations to provide care via mobile vans.

ANA notes that “nurses play a critical, central role in the safety net, ensuring that patients receive appropriate and needed care”.

There was another APRN, who spoke about her work with the Headstart programs in her state and mentioned working closely with school nurses. Her input led to me, speaking about school nurses as I am a school nurse. I added how we are the much-forgotten members of the healthcare team when it comes to children and families. I was able to highlight the National Association of School Nurse’s School Nursing Practice Framework™. School nursing works closely with families and communities to address safety net concerns on a day-to-day basis. It is important for all nurses to understand how important they are to the safety net as ANA has recognized. Our work, whether in the hospital or

community, can help to reduce poor health outcomes, it just takes that additional time to have deeper conversations with individual patients and in communities. Listening and knowing their needs is vital to being the nurse safety net that we know we can be. ■

Reference

National Association of School Nurses. (2024). A contemporary Framework update for today’s school nursing landscape: Introducing the School Nursing Practice Framework™. NASN School Nurse, 0(0). doi:10.1177/1942602X241241092. v