

# Policy, Politics and the Future of Nursing

Pat Barnett

CEO

New Jersey State Nurses Association



# NJSNA

NJSNA has lobbied on behalf of nurses in the legislature and in the agencies

- Impact legislation
  - Introduce legislation to benefit nurses
  - Work to change bills through amendments or to defeat them
- Impact regulations that set out rules for how the laws are to be implemented. This requires monitoring all the regulations that are published
- Worked to elect legislators who are friends of nurses



# Recent Achievements

- ❑ *S1885 Prohibits the restraint of prisoners during and immediately after childbirth.* Introduced by Sen. Vitale at NJSNA's request
- ❑ *POLST*, Physician ordered Life Sustaining Treatment passed in late 2011. NJSNA worked with NJHA and others to amend the language and include APNs as providers able to order POLST
- ❑ Working with the Board of Utilities to allow APNs to write orders to keep utilities on for their patients in need

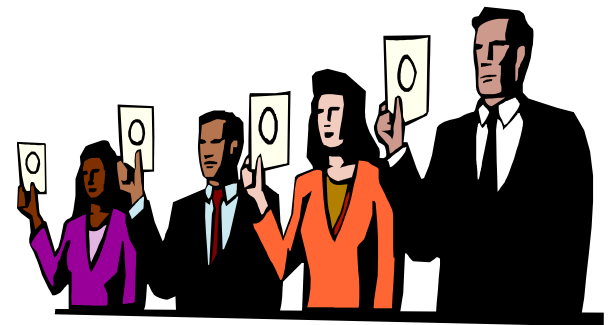
# Why Should Nurses Be Politically Active?

- Who decides how much public support will be given to your school district?
- Who decides whether you can practice nursing in your state?
- Who decides whether schools will have a certified RN or another health professional in the public schools?

# POLITICIANS

## Who elects them?

# You!



# What is Politics?

- ❑ Influencing
- ❑ A process by which one influences the decisions of others and exerts control over situations and events - a means to an end
- ❑ The allocation of scarce resources

# What is Policy?

- ❑ The principles that govern action directed toward a given outcome
- ❑ The choices that society, or segment of society, or an organization makes regarding its goals and priorities and how it will allocate its resources

# Nurses' Influence On Policy

- ❑ Advocate for our profession
- ❑ Advocate for our patients
- ❑ Advocate for health and welfare of the community
- ❑ Bring health care expertise which legislators rely on (general & specialty areas)
  - Legislators do not understand the difference in education or scope of practice between a certified school nurse and an RN or an LPN



# How to Benefit Nursing

## - Having a Say in Laws Governing Nursing and Healthcare

- NJSNA members influence legislation
  - We were able to pass Alternative to Discipline Legislation that allows nurses who are mentally ill or who have substance abuse issues to go into treatment and monitoring instead of losing their license
  - We fight for school nurses to prevent watering down of the laws/regulations we helped to pass to ensure adequate care for students
  - NJSNA has worked with key legislators to pass legislation allowing APNs to practice independently, we are working on additional changes
  - ANA is working closely with Congress and White House on Healthcare Reform



# How to Benefit Nursing

## - Ensuring Standards of Practice

- NJSNA works closely with the NJ Board of Nursing (BON) reviewing the standards set by the agency that oversees your nursing practice. You can work with us on these issues
  - Involved in modifying the Cullen regulations to prevent nurses from being penalized unfairly
  - Use ANA guidelines to argue for staffing and credentialing
- Monitor actions by other groups/professions to ensure their actions do not encroach on nursing practice
  - EMT
  - LPN
  - Non-licensed care givers

# Why Should Nurses be Involved Now?

- ❑ The Governor's priorities include dramatically changing the education system
    - Cuts to benefits
    - Threatened outsourcing
    - Changes in certification making it less rigorous allowing schools to bring in less qualified people
    - Eliminating the need for certification
- This is NOT personal it is budget driven

# How Can You be Involved as a Citizen?

- Vote – educate yourself to the issues and candidates first
- Volunteer to do campaign work through a party or an organization
- Lobby key legislators
- Run for office

# Political Participation

*Political participation derives from the freedom to speak out, assemble and associate; the ability to take part in the conduct of public affairs; and the opportunity to register as a candidate, to campaign, to be elected and to hold office at all levels of government.*

*WomenWatch*

*WomenWatch is the United Nations Internet Gateway on the Advancement and Empowerment of Women.*



# Challenges to Participation

- ❑ 43.2 percent of Americans of voting age did not vote in the last election. Americans feel less certain that they can have an impact
  - The highest percentages of eligible voters who actually vote are 45 and above.
  - The more education and the higher the income an individual has, the more likely he or she is to vote
- ❑ Obstacles to voting
- ❑ Time to participate
- ❑ Don't think they can participate if they cannot donate to candidates
- ❑ Don't know anyone who has participated
- ❑ Don't like the political process

# How Can I Impact School Nurse Issues?

In addition to participating as a citizen there are specific things you can do

- Join your association or get active in your association
- Learn as much as you can about the issues and who the players are
- Reach out to people to educate them
  - Parents and pupils
  - Neighbors
  - Local legislators
  - Community leaders
  - Write letters to the editor

# What Steps Might NJSNA and NJSSNA Take?

- ❑ Review the Taskforce recommendations and create position paper(s)
- ❑ Education campaign
  - PTA
  - Legislators; committees first then your legislators
  - Teachers
- ❑ Build alliances with unions, professional and disease associations, communities parents, kids



# Who Sits on Key Committees?

## Senate Education

M. Teresa Ruiz, Chair  
Shirley K. Turner,  
Vice-Chair

Diane B. Allen

James Beach

Michael J. Doherty

## Assembly Education

Patrick J. Diegnan, Chair  
Bonnie Watson Coleman, Vice-  
Chair

Ralph R. Caputo

Betty Lou DeCroce

Mila M. Jasey,

Angelica M. Jimenez

Scott T. Rumana

Troy Singleton

Connie Wagner

David W. Wolfe

# Where Do I Find My Legislators?

*New Jersey*  
LEGISLATURE



<http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/>

When you go to this page you can find your legislators names, which committees they are on, who is on what key committee and what bills have been created and where they are in the process

# PACs

## **PACs are a tool, not an end**

- Provide access to elected officials**
- Primary task – To endorse and support candidates for elective office who support the legislative agenda and beliefs of the NJSNA**
- PAC support is not just cash it is also volunteers and taking active steps to support the legislators who support nursing**

# INPAC

**The Interested Nurses Political Action Committee (INPAC) is a nonpartisan political action committee of NJSNA. As the political arm of NJSNA, it does not lobby. Instead it aims to influence health policy discussion by endorsing and contributing to candidates. The INPAC Board of Trustees is made up of nurses from all over New Jersey in all fields of nursing.**

- Participate in state and local elections**
- Conduct fundraising activities**
- Make candidate endorsements**
- Manage contributions**
- Educate candidates & nurses on political issues**

# Regulations

You can do a search of NJ regulations at <http://www.michie.com/newjersey/lpext.dll?f=templates&fn=main-h.htm&cp=>

**Regulation** is administrative legislation that constitutes or constrains rights and allocates responsibilities. It can be distinguished from primary legislation (by elected legislative body) on the one hand and judge-made law on the other. Regulations in New Jersey are drafted after a law is passed to define how the law will be implemented and enforced.

One can consider regulation as actions of conduct imposing sanctions, such as a fine, to the extent permitted by the law of the land. This action of administrative law, or implementing regulatory law, may be contrasted with statutory or case law.

# State Versus Federal

## New Jersey

- Impact state laws and regulations
- Identify legislators  
<http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/members/legsearch.asp>
- Follow legislative action
  - NJSNA
  - New Jersey State School Nurses Association
  - NJEA

## Federal

- Impact state laws and regulations
- Identify legislators  
<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/members>
- Follow legislative action
  - ANA
  - National Association of School Nurses
  - NEA

# Nurse Activism – Working for Nurses in Washington

## American Nurses Association

- Provide education and expert testimony to both legislators and also committees discussing and deciding on pivotal legislation.
- Worked closely with legislators on the development and implementation of Affordable care act.
- Works with HHS and other agencies to impact the regulations that effect nurses
- Partners with state nurses associations and other national Nurses Associations



# What Has ANA Done?

- ❑ Developed Principles for Delegation that also applies in schools
- ❑ With the California School Nurses Organization won a case in 2008 enforcing the California Nurse Practice Act for administration of insulin in K-12 public schools. This was later appealed
- ❑ Created workplace protections and guidelines



# ANA Action

**Help Fight For Nurses In The 112th Congress!**

[http://www.rnaction.org/site/PageServer?pagename=nstat\\_homepage](http://www.rnaction.org/site/PageServer?pagename=nstat_homepage)

**ANA President, Karen Daley, Testifies Before House Appropriations Subcommittee**

<http://www.capitolupdate.org/>



# ANA PARTNERS in ACTION



## Tri-Council

American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Nurses Association  
American Organization of Nurse Executives  
National League for Nursing

## Organizational Affiliates

American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses  
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists  
American Nephrology Nurses' Association  
American Psychiatric Nurses Association  
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care  
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses  
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses  
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric & Neonatal Nurses  
Emergency Nurses Association  
International Nurses Society on Addictions  
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists  
National Association of School Nurses  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association  
Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society

