



2026 Advocacy Agenda



American
Nurses
Association

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INTRODUCTION

Advocacy is a cornerstone of professional associations. The American Nurses Association (ANA) works to ensure that nurses have a voice in decisions at the federal, state, and organizational levels that affect nurses and the patients they serve. While Congress remains closely divided along partisan lines in 2026, the needs of nurses, patients, and our healthcare delivery system demand action to improve the work environment, ensure a steady pipeline of nurses to meet growing demands, recognize the value of the nurse, and deliver improvements in access and quality that can drive better, more efficient outcomes.

ANA's advocacy teams focus on federal legislation and regulation as well as state government affairs to ensure that ANA has a place at the table wherever decisions are made affecting nurses. This work involves collaboration with constituent and state nursing associations, organizational affiliates, as well as other nursing, industry, and consumer advocacy organizations to achieve the broadest impact possible on policy decisions affecting nurses.

ANA's nonpartisan advocacy approach centers on nursing priorities while working directly with the White House, Congress, federal agencies, and state governments to educate them about and advance policies that improve the nursing profession and practice. This multifaceted approach includes targeted advocacy and analysis, official comments, grassroots advocacy that engages ANA membership in support of policy priorities, and political action activities that enhance advocacy efforts.

The 2026 ANA advocacy agenda is positioned to respond to the evolving political landscape, with President Donald Trump and the 119th Congress in their second year with Republicans maintaining razor-thin majorities in the House and Senate. Built on established ANA principles, this agenda enables collaboration with both sides of the political aisle while maintaining focus on the issues most meaningful to nurses.

PRIORITY ISSUES

Work Environment & Safety

Workplace safety and reasonable working conditions are foundational to nurse retention and patient safety. The nursing profession has long advocated for protections against violence, elimination of unsafe staffing mandates, and elimination of environmental hazards like surgical smoke. These priorities stem directly from ANA's commitment to ensuring nurses can practice safely and sustainably while delivering the high-quality care patients depend on.



Workplace Violence Prevention: Ensuring all health care settings have a violence prevention plan and working closely with Congress and the Occupational Health & Safety Administration (OSHA) to create a national standard for violence prevention.



Mandatory Overtime Prohibitions: Eliminating mandatory overtime requirements for nurses while continuing to allow nurses to obtain overtime if they choose to do so and believe they can do so safely.



Staffing: Working with Congress, federal agencies, and states to improve nurse staffing to ensure patient safety, avoid burnout and deliver high-quality care that only nurses can provide.



Surgical Smoke: Building off success at passing surgical smoke elimination laws and regulations in several states, ANA is pursuing federal legislation to require the availability and use of surgical smoke evacuation devices in all operating rooms.

Workforce Pipeline & Education

The nursing shortage demands sustained investment in nursing education and career development at all levels. Federal funding programs like Title VIII are essential to building an adequate nursing workforce, but so is removing financial barriers through student loan access and strengthening the educator pipeline. ANA's workforce priorities ensure the nation has enough nurses to meet growing healthcare demands while supporting career progression and professional growth.



Title VIII: Working to maintain and increase funding for nurse training and education across all levels of education in the largest federal program that supports nursing education. We will continue to emphasize professional ladders to ensure nurses can continue to progress in their careers and to take on more advanced roles as they choose.



Student Loan Access: Nurses deserve to have access to the federal student loans they need to obtain the education required for licensure and professional advancement. From the four Advanced Practice Registered Nurse roles to the Doctorates necessary for nursing faculty, access to adequate federal student loans is critical to the profession of nursing and to our healthcare system as a whole.



Faculty and Preceptor Support: Supporting legislative and regulatory efforts to increase the number of nurse faculty and preceptors to educate, train, and meet the growing demand for the next generation of nurses.

Access & Health Outcomes

Patient outcomes are fundamentally tied to nursing access and practice capacity. Whether through full practice authority for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), addressing health disparities, ensuring maternal health equity, or protecting critical safety net programs like Medicaid, ANA advocates for policies that expand patient access to nurses and remove barriers to evidence-based nursing practice. These priorities reflect ANA's commitment to health equity and quality care delivery.



Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN)

Full Practice Authority: Allowing APRNs to work at the top of their licenses and working as efficiently as possible to meet patient needs.



Addressing Social Determinants of Health

(SDoH): Emphasizing the need to address SDoH based upon regional, socio-economic, as well as racial, gender, sexual orientation, religious, and condition-specific needs and challenges.



Women's & Maternal Health Care:

Tackling the national maternal morbidity and mortality crisis and addressing inadequate maternal health care remains a priority. Additionally, we are working to ensure women across the country have unfettered access to the medical care they need for all aspects of their lives and health.



Medicaid:

Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) are foundational programs for our healthcare system. These programs provide coverage for nearly 80 million beneficiaries and is the single largest payer within our health system. Protecting the nation's healthcare safety net is critical as Medicaid funding and related policies have direct impact on patient access to trusted nurse clinicians, reimbursement, and the delivery of quality care.

Payment & Administrative Burden

Nurses face mounting administrative burdens and inequitable reimbursement that undermine their ability to deliver patient care. From prior authorization delays to opaque payment policies, these barriers directly impact nurse burnout and limit patient access to nursing expertise. ANA is working to streamline administrative processes and ensure payment structures support nursing care quality and sustainability.



Payment Policy/Reimbursement: Advocating for enhanced transparency and equity in reimbursement for nursing services and ensuring that payment policy incentivizes improved nurse staffing and patient access to nurses' expertise.



Prior-Authorization: Addressing proposed changes to reduce the provider burden on nurses related to payer policies.



Taxes: Ensuring changes to tax policy do not negatively impact nurses, professional associations, and that nurses can maximize advantages from tax initiatives related to healthcare professionals.

Technology, Artificial Intelligence & the Future of Nursing

Artificial intelligence and emerging technologies are transforming healthcare delivery. As these tools become increasingly integrated into clinical practice, nursing must be centered in their development and implementation to ensure they enhance rather than replace nurse judgment and patient care. ANA is committed to shaping policy that maximizes the benefits of technology while protecting the nursing profession and patient safety.



www.rnaction.org

RESOURCES & GETTING INVOLVED: RN ACTION

ANA's Advocacy Action Center, RN Action, empowers members and other interested individuals to reach out and advocate with elected officials in support of ANA's policy priorities.



Federal Advocacy Library: ANA's Policy & Government Affairs Team makes available all official correspondence and comments to Congress and federal agencies so members and policymakers can view our positions and the scope of work we carry out on behalf of nurses.



Membership Assembly Hill Day: ANA conducts an annual Hill Day in Washington, DC in conjunction with our Membership Assembly to bring nurses to the Capitol to advocate face to face with Members of Congress and their staff on our priority issues. In 2025, ANA's Hill Day included nearly 500 nurse leaders from all over the country, including students who participated in Hill Day for the first time. Hill Day is open to any members who want to come to Washington and join in advocacy efforts. In 2026, Hill Day will take place on Thursday, June 25.



Nurses Action Society (NAS): Members Only

The NAS shapes healthcare policy. This ANA member-only program empowers nurses to take their advocacy to the next level.



ANA-Political Action Committee (ANA-PAC): Members Only

ANA PAC enhances our ability to advocate directly with Members of Congress and create positive policy outcomes for members.

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ANA POLICY & GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Tim Nanof, *Executive Vice President, Policy Government Affairs*

The **Congressional Advocacy** team advances ANA's federal legislative agenda through direct lobbying and engagement with Congress and national partners.

Sam Hewitt, *Managing Director, Government Affairs*

Simit Pandya, *Director, Congressional & Grassroots Advocacy*

Jean Cornell, *Government Affairs Manager*

Katherine Rowe, *Grassroots Advocacy Manager*

The **Regulatory Advocacy** team engages federal agencies and the Administration on regulations, guidance, and implementation of health policy affecting nurses.

Zina Gontscharow, *Director, Policy & Regulatory Advocacy*

Jonah Mainzer, *Senior Policy Advisor*

Alison Hernandez, *Senior Policy Advisor*

Amanda Rosner, *Policy Advisor*

The **State Government Affairs** team coordinates state level advocacy strategies and supports the Constituent/State Nurses Association in advancing shared priorities.

Robyn Peacher, *Director, State Government Affairs*

Bob Brown, *State Government Affairs Coordinator*

Lauren Michaud, *PGOV Administrative Assistant*





ANA is the premier organization representing the interests of the nation's over 5 million registered nurses (RNs), through its state and constituent member associations, organizational affiliates, and individual members. ANA advances the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting a safe and ethical work environment, bolstering the health and wellness of nurses, and advocating on healthcare issues that affect nurses and the public. ANA members also include the four advanced practice registered nurse roles (APRNs): nurse practitioners (NPs), clinical nurse specialists (CNSs), certified nurse-midwives (CNMs), and certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs). RNs serve in multiple direct care, care coordination, and administration leadership roles, across the full spectrum of healthcare settings. RNs provide and coordinate patient care, educate patients and the public about various health conditions including essential self-care, and provide advice and emotional support to patients and their family members.

