

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# The Power of Presence: Nurses Leading Through Voice and Action



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As we move toward the later part of the summer, I want to take a moment to reflect on a recent experience that reminded me—again—of the extraordinary power nurses hold when we come together with purpose.

At this year's **ANA Membership Assembly in Washington D.C.**, I was struck by the collective strength in the room. Delegates from across the country stood up—not just as representatives of their associations and States, but as advocates for the future of nursing. Whether debating critical issues or casting votes that shape national ANA policy, one truth was evident: **your voice matters**. It was more than policy; it was passion, experience, and the lived realities of our profession fueling action.

There is something powerful about presence. When nurses show up—whether in a legislative office or chamber, a boardroom, a classroom, or a hospital floor—change follows. That's why the theme of this year's Assembly, centered on bold leadership and unified advocacy, resonated so deeply.

500 plus nurses attended American Nurses Association's (ANA) Hill Day from 47 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, and the U. S. Virgin Islands. The passionate and energized group of nurses met with 244 House of Representatives offices and 92 Senate offices. The group of nurses, nursing students, and nurse leaders shared information, insights, and personal experiences to educate lawmakers about priority legislative issues including:

- Preserving funding for Medicaid
- Reauthorizing Title VIII Nursing Workforce Programs
- Protecting nurses from workplace violence
- Improving patients' access to care

Joining me on the Hill from ANA-Michigan this year were President-elect Bethany Campbell, ANA-Michigan Secretary Nadine Wodwaski, Board members Maria Bobo, Joe Current as well as past President and current ANA-Bylaws committee member Julia Stocker Snieder. We were also joined by several other Michigan nurse guests of ANA. We met with our Michigan Senators and House Representatives on key issues that our nurses in Michigan are facing. Since this was our day to be seen and heard we were welcomed into the halls and offices of Congress—as the experts we are on nursing practice, education, and regulation, and on matters of importance to our care of patients within our Michigan communities. We learned many things but heard loud and clear that our elected officials needed “our stories about impact of current and proposed change are having on patients, communities and the healthcare systems”. Our Michigan voices with our nursing experiences mattered to those elected officials as we engaged in a fundamental act of democracy.

*Membership Assembly* continued with the work of ANA through Bylaw changes, budget and financial reviews of the As-



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sociation, the development of policy and practices, issues forums and National Board and Committee elections all of which will guide ANA into the future. Key dialogue forum topics included: 1: Advancing Rural Health Through Nursing Innovation and Advocacy, 2: A Policy Development for the Effective Use of Artificial Intelligence from the Lens of Ethics Within the Scope of Nursing Practice and 3: Revising and Protecting the Role of the RN. Nursing: Scope and Practice. Lots of powerful debate and conversations with plans for action as ANA moves forward purposefully in this next year.

## But the work doesn't stop there.

As we look ahead to ANA-Michigan's **Advocacy Day on September 17th in Lansing Michigan**, I encourage every one of you to think about how you, too, can show up, physically or virtually, and make your voice heard. This is your opportunity to meet with policymakers, share your stories, and elevate the issues that affect nurses, patients, and the future of healthcare. Your presence can influence funding decisions, workforce protections, and educational investments that ripple across the entire profession.

Even if you've never participated before, I urge you: **now is the time**. Our profession is navigating complex challenges—from workplace safety to AI integration and staffing and resource shortages. The solutions won't come from outside. They must be shaped by us.

Let's keep the momentum going. Let's keep showing up. **Your presence matters. Your voice matters.** Together, nurses are the power behind progress forward. ■

With pride and in partnership,  
Barbara R. Medvec DNP, RN, NEA-BC  
President, ANA-Michigan

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