

From the Hill to the Hyatt: ANA Leading the Charge in D.C.

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From June 26–28, 2025, more than 500 nurses from across the country gathered in Washington, D.C., for the American Nurses Association (ANA) Hill Day and Membership Assembly. Among them was a passionate delegation from South Carolina, including TK Pugh, Dr. Jada Quinn, Dr. Nakita Barnes, Dr. Teresa Stephens, and Kim Tuemler. Together, we brought our voices, our stories, and our unwavering commitment to the profession to the nation's capital. This wasn't just another conference; it was a movement. A moment of unity, advocacy, and vision for the future of nursing.

Storming the Hill with Purpose

Hill Day began with a powerful mission: to advocate for policies that protect and empower nurses and the patients we serve. We met with lawmakers to urge action on several key issues:

- **Protect Medicaid funding**, especially for rural and underserved communities.
- **Increase Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development** funding to support recruitment, education, and retention.
- **Invest in the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR)** to advance nursing science and innovation.
- **Pass the bipartisan ICAN Act**, removing outdated barriers to APRN practice.

These legislative priorities are lifelines for our profession, our patients, and our communities. In South Carolina and beyond, nurses are facing workforce shortages, burnout, and systemic barriers. We reminded our elected officials that nurses are not just part of the healthcare system; we are its backbone. You can learn more about our activities on the ANA news page.

Where Policy Meets Passion: The Membership Assembly

Held at the Grand Hyatt in Washington, D.C., the ANA Membership Assembly brought together nurse leaders from all fifty states to shape the future of the profession. The Assembly is ANA's highest governing body, where

policy is debated, ethics are refined, and the collective voice of nursing is amplified. Please take a few minutes to read a detailed report of our activities for [Day 1](#) and [Day 2](#) of the Membership Assembly.

Highlights Included:

- **Artificial Intelligence in Nursing:** A robust discussion led to a recommendation for ANA to develop ethical and legal guidelines for AI use in nursing. The message was clear: AI must support, not replace, the clinical judgment and human connection that define our profession.
- **A Tribute to Our Legacy:** The National Nurses Honor Guard Coalition honored nurses who passed away this year, including former ANA President Eunice Cole and former CEO Dr. Loressa Cole. It was a moving reminder of the legacy we carry forward.
- **A Fireside Chat with Suleika Jaouad:** The best-selling author and cancer survivor shared her story of resilience and her deep appreciation for nurses. Her words left the room inspired and united.
- **Election of New ANA Board of Directors and Nominations & Elections Committee:** The election of these new leaders of ANA was an exciting and informative experience in democracy. These new and returning leaders are enthusiastic, competent, and committed to transforming healthcare through an exceptionally large and powerful collective voice. You can learn more about them here.

Reflections from the South Carolina Delegation

Our team left D.C. with renewed purpose and several powerful takeaways:

1. Our Unified Voice

There was a profound sense of unity as nurses from every state came together with a shared mission. The pride and energy were unmistakable as we prepared to meet with lawmakers and advocate for

meaningful change.

2. The Impact of Workplace Violence

One of the most sobering moments came when attendees were asked to stand if they had experienced workplace violence. A sizable portion of the room rose. It was a stark visual reminder that this issue is pervasive and underreported, and that workplace safety must remain a top advocacy priority.

3. The Importance of Engagement and Presence

The Assembly underscored the importance of nurses being present, whether at the bedside, in boardrooms, or on Capitol Hill. When absent, critical decisions are made without our voices. Advocacy extends beyond policy; it's about being a visible, vocal force for change in every arena we influence.

What's Next for South Carolina?

We are bringing the momentum home. That means:

- Supporting Senate Bill 45 and House Bill 3580 to grant full practice authority to APRNs.
- Opposing Senate Bill 669, which threatens to impose new restrictions on APRNs.
- Mobilizing nurses across the state to attend hearings, write letters, and participate in upcoming APRN Town Halls.
- Sharing information about the power of nursing with students, faculty, leaders, and practitioners. Please reach out to one of us if you would like us to speak to your group.

Final Thoughts

The 2025 ANA Hill Day and Membership Assembly reminded us that we are not waiting for permission; we are leading the charge. We are the voice, the vision, and the power behind the future of healthcare. To every nurse reading this: the torch is in our hands. Let's carry it forward. Let's build a stronger, smarter, and more equitable future for nursing in South Carolina and beyond. **Let's go and reveal The Power of Nurses!** ■