

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I Want to Hear From You

Contributing Author: Rebecca M. Patton, DNP, RN, CNOR, FAAN

I am not sure where the summer went this year, as ANA-Ohio was busy with multiple events and activities. One important responsibility was attending the annual American Nurses Association's (ANA) Membership Assembly in June. As many of you know, the Membership Assembly is the governing and official voting body of ANA (ANA, n.d.), meeting yearly to consider pressing and future issues and to provide direction to the Board of Directors.

Delegates from each state are elected in proportion to each state's number of members. This year, there were almost 250 state and ANA Organizational delegates, three of whom represented ANA-Ohio as voting delegates. This year, a consequential vote occurred that I would like to discuss with you.

At this meeting, delegates voted to approve major changes to ANA's bylaws, making licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and licensed vocational nurses (LVNs) eligible for full membership at the same dues rate as RNs. The possibility of allowing LPNs/LVNs to join ANA has been discussed over the years and was most recently considered in 2017, when the ANA Membership Assembly voted to allow individual constituent state nurses associations (C/SNAs) to accept LPNs or LVNs as state-only members. The 2025 ANA Membership Assembly discussed the proposal to include LPNs/LVNs in the national organization but tabled it to allow more time for discussion and evaluation. This year, the relevant bylaw changes were approved by an 88% vote in favor. The bylaws specified that each state could decide whether to open membership to LPNs or LVNs in its state association.

ANA-Ohio began our own discussion of this issue last year, following the 2025 membership Assembly. We established a Task Force to explore the many implications of changing our membership eligibility. The Task Force has contacted one of the states that has accepted LPNs as members since the 2017 ANA decision permitting this. In addition, a survey was sent to all ANA-Ohio members in March 2026, asking for opinions on the potential change to our bylaws. The Task Force continues to explore both the reasons favoring this change and the concerns raised about it as we await important ANA guidelines and infrastructure changes needed at the national level, including implications for continuing education approval.

According to the Ohio State Board of Nursing (OBN), there are currently 47,387 licensed practical nurses in Ohio (OBN, 2024). Forty-one percent report an intention to obtain an RN license. In terms of employment, 38% work in long-term care facilities, 8.7% in hospitals, 9.8% in assisted living facilities, 7.7% in home health, and 7.3% in ambulatory care settings. There is currently no state association representing licensed practical nurses in Ohio.

Over the next year, ANA-Ohio will need to evaluate the feasibility and the rationale for or against initiating a pilot program to test changes to our bylaws that would expand membership eligibility to LPNs. Including LPNs in our membership would be a major change in Ohio's history and we have members who feel strongly on both sides of this issue. As the professional nursing association in Ohio, we must have input from members on this issue.

At the same time, we need to learn whether Ohio LPNs want to join ANA-Ohio. LPNs must consider many factors. Dues were set at the ANA Membership Assembly at the same rate as RN members. This will certainly limit the number of LPNs who want to or can join us. I am certain many of you have thoughts on whether LPNs should belong. I hope to hear from you.

I want to end my message with two personal requests for you. The general election is only weeks away, and we need nurses to vote. It is the right thing to do. As I shared in the last editorial, nurses are uniquely positioned to see the consequences of not voting. Can you imagine the impact our profession could have if we consistently voted? In Ohio, this is an opportunity we can realize and enjoy. Please vote. Drive someone to the polls who cannot get there without help. And take pictures of yourself coming or leaving the polls. We need pictures for our social media and publications showing Ohio nurses taking steps to improve health by electing those who share our values. ■

Drop me an email at **President@ANA-Ohio.org** to share your thoughts.

Becky Patton **president@ana-ohio.org**

References

American Nurses Association. (n.d.). Membership Assembly. Retrieved from: *https://www.nursingworld.org/ana/leadership-and-governance/membership-assembly/*

Ohio Board of Nursing. (2024) 2024 Ohio LPN Workforce Data Summary Report. Retrieved from: *https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image/upload/nursing.ohio.gov/uploads/2024_Ohio_LPN_Workforce_Data_Summary_Report.pdf*