

Embracing Transparency and Engagement in ANA Political Action & Congressional Candidate Support

Submitted by: Justin Gill, DNP, APRN, RN, FNP-C
President, Washington State Nurses Association

Sponsor States: Arizona Nurses Association, ANA\California, Colorado Nurses Association, Florida Nurses Association, Hawaii-ANA, ANA Idaho, ANA-Illinois, Minnesota Organization of Registered Nurses, ANA-Michigan, Montana Nurses Association, New Mexico Nurses Association, ANA-Ohio, Oklahoma Nurses Association, Oregon Nurses Association, ANA Vermont, Washington State Nurses Association

Statement of Purpose: We are submitting this resolution to the ANA Membership Assembly representatives because of the unprecedented policy challenges facing the nursing profession, particularly with an upcoming high-stakes midterm election. Starting in 2022 there was a significant deviation from the longstanding practices of ANA-PAC, moving from a bipartisan, public congressional candidate endorsement process to a model based on financial support that is not promoted publicly. This change, which was instituted without consultation or deliberation with C/SNAs or elected member representatives, was described as a “pause,” but has continued for 4 years so far. The dynamics of our political system demand that nurses leverage their public trust through **visible support/endorsement** of congressional candidates based on their records and their support of nursing priorities. As the representative body of ANA members elected through the C/SNAs and the IMD, the Membership Assembly is the appropriate body to consider this matter.

WHEREAS, the nursing profession continues to rank first among the most trusted professions in the United States, and nurses hold a unique and influential role in shaping public policy and advancing the health of communities; and

WHEREAS, Provision 9.5 of the *Code of Ethics for Nurses* calls on nurses “to take an active role in the democratic process, including through robust civic engagement and legislative and political advocacy”; and

WHEREAS, the American Nurses Association and the ANA Political Action Committee (ANA-PAC) have historically supported and endorsed political candidates from both political parties who align with priorities important to nurses, patients, and public health; and

WHEREAS, political endorsements have historically served as an important mechanism for elevating nursing’s voice, strengthening the visibility of the profession in policymaking spaces, and signaling support for candidates who champion healthcare access, workforce protections, public health, and nursing priorities; and

WHEREAS, while acknowledging financial support to candidates is an important part of policy advocacy, there is also great value in providing visible, public endorsement and/or support from nursing which hold significant value for candidates who support nursing's values and priorities; and

WHEREAS, traditionally, ANA-PAC decisions on support for congressional candidates had been made in consultation with constituent/state nurses associations (C/SNAs), recognizing both the value of C/SNA knowledge of candidates' records and the potential implications of such decisions for C/SNA policy advocacy; and

WHEREAS, major changes to ANA-PAC practices regarding candidate endorsement and support were implemented in 2022 without consultation with C/SNAs, elected membership assembly representatives, or ANA membership; and

WHEREAS, transparency, accountability, and member engagement are foundational values of democratic governance within professional organizations; and

WHEREAS, ANA members, including ANA-PAC contributors and prospective contributors, deserve clear and accessible information regarding political contribution decisions, endorsement and support practices, and the rationales used to support candidates for public office;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the ANA Membership Assembly, as the representative body of ANA members, strongly urges the ANA Board of Directors (BOD) and the ANA-PAC Board of Trustees (BOT) to:

- Adopt and maintain policies that ***promote transparency and public visibility*** regarding political contribution and support/endorsement decisions;
- Return to the previous practice of consulting with C/SNAs regarding endorsement/support of congressional candidates, particularly non-incumbents;
- Ensure timely communication to ANA members regarding candidates receiving ANA-PAC financial support or endorsement, including the rationale and guiding criteria used in those decisions;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, ANA Membership Assembly encourages the ANA Board of Directors and the ANA-PAC BOT to recognize and leverage the public trust placed in nurses through visible political engagement and candidate support and/or endorsement practices that elevate the voice and priorities of the nursing profession; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, ANA Membership Assembly calls upon the ANA Board of Directors and ANA-PAC BOT to uphold the organizational values of transparency, accountability, member engagement, and democratic participation in matters related to political advocacy and electoral activities.