



## 2009-2011 LEGISLATIVE AND HEALTH POLICY STATEMENTS

The Tennessee Nurses Association (TNA) is the professional association representing Tennessee's 70,000 registered nurses. This position paper outlines the basic philosophy of TNA's House of Delegates relative to health care policy which may be addressed by the Tennessee General Assembly and the U.S. Congress.

**Mission:** *The mission of TNA is to promote and protect the registered nurse and to advance the practice of nursing in order to assure a healthier Tennessee.*

**TNA supports a restructured health care system that ensures:**

- Equitable and affordable access to essential health care services for all citizens and residents of this state;
- A standardized package of essential health care services provided and financed by public and private plans, including protection against catastrophic costs and impoverishment; and
- Direct access to a full range of professional registered nurses and other qualified health care providers who offer their services in a variety of delivery systems.

**TNA supports initiatives to improve safe, quality, cost-effective health care and enhance affordable access to professional nursing services through:**

- Assuring an adequate nursing workforce to meet current and projected health care demands;
- Collaboration with other professional and regulatory bodies to protect and advance nursing practice and quality patient care;
- Support of the Board of Nursing's role as the sole regulatory authority over all nursing education and nursing practice;
- Elimination of financial, regulatory, and institutional barriers to the practice of professional nursing;
- Participation of professional registered nurses on all local, state, and national health care advisory and policy making boards and committees; and
- Oppose any activities intended to restrain the ability of professional advanced practice nurses from providing quality, cost-effective and accessible health care to the citizens of Tennessee.

**TNA supports health care initiatives that assure the protection of human rights as outlined by the American Nurses Association's Code of Ethics.**

**TNA supports health care initiatives that assure an adequate number of school nurses and adoption of the ANA position statement recommending a ratio of one (1) nurse per 750 students.**

**TNA supports initiatives that encourage adoption of the principles of the Magnet Recognition Program<sup>®</sup> leading to nursing excellence.**

**TNA supports and advocates that both Federal and State dollars be made available to address the shortage of nurses with the following funding priorities:**

- Funding of additional slots for nursing students;
- Funding additional faculty positions for nursing schools in the state of Tennessee;
- Continued funding of the loan forgiveness program for graduate nursing students.

**TNA supports programs and initiatives that provide a safe work environment, and advocates for facility rules that are consistent with the ANA's *Principles of Staffing and the Handle with Care Program*, including but not limited to the following priorities:**

- Promotion of nurse safety in the patient care environment;
- Staffing effectiveness plans;
- Whistleblower protection;
- Ban on the use of mandatory overtime; and
- Support of the Tennessee Nursing Partnership Collaboration.

**TNA supports the ANA's Scope and Standards of Practice for registered nurses and advanced practice nurses through:**

- Enactment of statutory and regulatory revisions that will enhance the role of RNs and APNs in the care of people in Tennessee;
- Inclusion of APNs as licensed independent providers (LIPs) in hospital licensure rules, health plans and health care facilities;
- Support of "any qualified" provider legislation;
- Enforcement of insurance laws in the public and private sectors.

**TNA supports increased participation of registered nurses as leaders in health policy**

**Education:** TNA will promote continuing education to prepare registered nurses to become candidates for state and local elective office and political appointments.

**Advocacy:** TNA will seek key appointments for qualified registered nurses both as policy officials and as members of policy-making committees, commissions and boards.