



# 2018 Resolutions

Passed by the General Assembly | October 13, 2018

**Resolution 2018-1**  
Support for Veterans

**Resolution 2018-2**  
Advocacy Priorities

**Resolution 2018-3**  
Continuing Education Program Priorities

**Resolution 2018-4**  
Promoting the Service of Nurses on Boards

**Resolution 2018-5**  
Abandon the Buddy System: Breaks for Healthcare Workers = Better Patient Care

**Resolution 2018-6**  
Collective Bargaining Dues

**Resolution 2018-7**  
Affiliate Member Organizations

**Resolution 2018-8**  
Keeping Families Together

**Resolution 2018-9**  
Opposing Enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact Legislation in Alaska

**Resolution 2018-10**  
Safe and Effective Nurse Staffing

**Resolution 2018-11**  
Creating a Healthcare Workforce that Reflects our Community



**Resolution 2018-1**  
**Support for Veterans**

WHEREAS, the nation and many of our allies are commemorating the Centennial of World War I (WWI); and

WHEREAS, over 22,000 professionally-trained female nurses were recruited by the American Red Cross to serve in the U.S. Army between 1917 and 1919 — and over 10,000 of these served near the Western Front; and

WHEREAS, more than 1,500 nurses served in the U.S. Navy during this period, and several hundred worked for the American Red Cross. Additionally, a handful worked in American units of the British and French armies; and

WHEREAS, the first two Americans to die in the line of duty during World War I were reportedly two female nurses accidentally killed by misfiring ordinance aboard the USS Mongolia, one of the first troop ships to arrive in France in 1917; and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of individuals such as Lenah Higbee, the Navy Nurse Corps grew from 22 original nurses in 1908 to over 10,000 in wartime, recognized by Higbee being the first woman to be awarded the Navy Cross in 1918 and also the first woman in the Navy to have a ship named after her; and

WHEREAS, the Nurses Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery is a granite statue of a nurse in uniform, sculptured by Frances Rich, that honors the nurses who served in the U.S. armed forces in World War I, many of whom rest among the hundreds of nurses buried in Section 21 - also called the 'Nurses Section'; and

WHEREAS, the proposed National WWI Memorial in Washington DC will incorporate Nursing into the sculpture; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alaska Nurses Association formally endorse the construction of the WWI Memorial at Pershing Park in Washington DC; and

RESOLVED, that AaNA formally contact the Governor's Alaska Military History Museum Advisory Task Force to extend our offer of cooperation as a partner in developing or enhancing the historical preservation of nursing service in WWI and all conflicts since.



## **Resolution 2018-2 Advocacy Priorities**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following are priorities for the Alaska Nurses Association's advocacy activities for October 2018 to October 2019:

- Maintaining the collective bargaining rights of Alaska's workers and safeguarding worker protections including those related to workplace safety, worker privacy, and labor rights; and
- Standing in opposition to Alaska's participation in the Enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact and working to maintain a strong and independent Alaska Board of Nursing funded through licensing fees; and
- Continuing to work with NIOSH and AKOSH to develop and promulgate safe lifting standards in the healthcare industry and ensuring that all Alaska nurses have access to lift assist devices and are educated in their proper use; and
- Continuing Mental Health First Aid and suicide prevention educational opportunities for Alaskans; and
- Supporting and advocating for increased funding and access to mental health care services for Alaskans through legislation, education, and policy; and
- Supporting and advocating for expansion and funding of substance abuse prevention and treatment programs in our communities, with particular emphasis on addressing Alaska's opioid epidemic; and
- Working to ensure that all of Alaska's students have daily access to a professionally-prepared school nurse; and
- Working to protect Alaskans from harmful chemicals; and
- Supporting strong, fully-funded public health programs in Alaska which include access to public health nurses to promote healthy communities throughout the state; and
- Promoting a safe and healthy workplace for all Alaskan nurses and healthcare workers through legislation, education, and policies; and
- Campaigning to end workplace violence in healthcare settings; and
- Advocating for Alaskan nurses by writing white papers that support the vision, values, and purpose of the Alaska Nurses Association; and
- Educating and connecting Alaskan nurses by publishing The Alaska Nurse magazine; and
- Ensuring that all Alaskans have access to high-quality, affordable healthcare; and
- Working to assure the affordability of prescription drugs for Alaskans; and
- Ending healthcare billing practices that contribute to medical debt; and
- Supporting proposals for debt-free higher education and advancing policies to alleviate the student loan debt crisis; and
- Addressing the healthcare workforce shortage and increasing recruitment and retention of nurses and healthcare professionals.



**Resolution 2018-3**  
**Continuing Education Program Priorities**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following are priorities for the Alaska Nurses Association's Continuing Education Program for October 2018 to October 2019:

- Maintaining continuing education activities for nurses throughout the state of Alaska through in-person education, online webinar opportunities, and The Alaska Nurse magazine; and
- Continuing to jointly provide continuing education activities with community partners; and
- Establishing as a focus for 2019 to promote ongoing professional development amongst Alaskan nurses, and
- Ensuring the sustainability and progress of the Alaska Nurses Association's Continuing Education Program.

**Resolution 2018-4**  
**Promoting the Service of Nurses on Boards**

WHEREAS, nurses are an under-utilized resource to improve the health of communities and the nation; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Nurses Association supports the initiative of the Nurses on Boards Coalition to build healthier communities by increasing nurses' presence on corporate, health-related, and other boards, panels, and commissions; and

WHEREAS, the Nurses on Boards Coalition was created in response to the landmark 2010 Institute of Medicine report on the need for nurses to take a greater role in America's increasingly complex healthcare system; and

WHEREAS, the intent of the Nurses on Boards Coalition is to ensure that at least 10,000 nurses are serving on boards by 2020; and

WHEREAS, AaNA is an active participant in the Alaska Nursing Action Coalition, driving the initiative in Alaska to encourage and support nurses to serve on boards throughout our state; and

WHEREAS, AaNA has inaugurated its support of the initiative to increase the number of nurses on all types of boards and other bodies through its 2018 Trending Tropics in Nursing Conference with a presentation by the Alaska Nursing Action Coalition entitled "Nurses on Boards: From Passion to Purpose" in order to encourage and support Alaskan nurses' involvement on boards and with the initiative; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, the Alaska Nurses Association promote awareness of the Nurses on Boards Coalition and continue to encourage nurses across Alaska to make unique contributions to achieving the goals of improved health and efficient and effective healthcare systems by finding boards of interest to join; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will solicit and publish articles in The Alaska Nurse magazine to promote board service, highlight the experiences of nurses serving on boards, assist nurses in building leadership skills, and share resources and opportunities related to board service; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will build awareness with corporate, non-profit, and government leaders, and with the public at large, of the value of including nurses on boards, panels, and commissions in order to achieve shared goals of improved health for Alaskans.



## **Resolution 2018-5**

### **Abandon the Buddy System: Breaks for Healthcare Workers = Better Patient Care**

WHEREAS, nurses' working conditions are patients' healing conditions; and

WHEREAS, Alaska nurses report experiencing the inability to regularly take uninterrupted meal and rest breaks due to inadequate staffing and patient care demands; and

WHEREAS; hospitals across Alaska utilize the so-called "break buddy" system, requiring nurses to double-up on patient loads while covering for colleagues' breaks; and

WHEREAS, nurses have a professional duty to provide safe patient care and frequently are forced to forgo meal and rest breaks because they are unwilling to jeopardize the health of their patients through the usage of an unsafe break buddy system; and

WHEREAS, a lack of meal and rest breaks has the effect of potential harm to both patients and nurses; and

WHEREAS, missed breaks cause nurses to experience increased job-related stress, fatigue, and mental exhaustion, the effects of which can compromise safe patient care and lead to an increase in preventable medical errors including an increased likelihood of medication errors, complications and infections, and even patient deaths; and

WHEREAS, an additional detrimental effect of missed breaks is very high levels of nursing burnout and turnover; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2016 National Healthcare Retention & RN Staffing Report, the average cost of turnover a single nurse ranges from \$37,700 to \$58,400 and hospitals report losing an average of \$5.2 million to \$8.1 million annually due to turnover; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's hospitals compete for Registered Nurses across the US, but particularly the Pacific Northwest; and

WHEREAS, state laws across the west coast allow for nurses to receive uninterrupted meal and rest breaks; and

WHEREAS, nursing retention both depends on and is essential to healthy and safe work environments; and



WHEREAS, we believe the patients and consumers of Alaskan healthcare deserve the highest quality of care possible at all times; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, the Alaska Nurses Association will educate the public, elected officials of Alaska, and other stakeholders on the dangers posed to patients through use of the break buddy system in the healthcare industry; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will advocate for Alaska's legislative and regulatory bodies to hold healthcare employers accountable to provide adequate professional staffing to allow an uninterrupted meal and rest breaks for nurses and other health professionals in Alaska; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will collaborate with other unions and community organizations to fight for uninterrupted meal and rest breaks for healthcare professionals in order to improve worker retention and ensure that Alaskans receive the safe and high-quality healthcare that patients deserve.



**Resolution 2018-6**  
**Collective Bargaining Dues**

WHEREAS, the Alaska Nurses Association (AaNA) bylaws require the annual confirmation of union dues for AaNA Labor Program members:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the dues for the nurses represented by the AaNA Labor Program will not exceed \$930.50 for 2018.



**Resolution 2018-7**

**Affiliate Member Organizations of the Alaska Nurses Association**

WHEREAS, the AaNA bylaws require the annual confirmation of affiliate member organizations of the Alaska Nurses Association;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the current affiliate member organizations are:

- Alaska School Nurses Association

**Resolution 2018-8**  
**Keeping Families Together**

WHEREAS, On April 6, 2018, Attorney General Jeff Sessions notified all US Attorneys' offices of a new "zero-tolerance" policy for immigrants crossing the border into the United States illegally; and

WHEREAS, this "zero-tolerance" policy has led to a significant increase in the number of immigrant children, as young as 18 months old, held in U.S. government custody and separated from their parents; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services shelters are at capacity, and the average length of time spent in these shelters is 57 days; and

WHEREAS, organizations providing care for these children have reported signs of separation trauma, the signs of which include inability to sleep, nightmares, crying, begging for their parents, and physical pain; and

WHEREAS, separating children from their parents disrupts a child's healthy development and can lead to physiologic changes that result in short- and long-term negative effects on physical, mental, and behavioral health, and this causes irreparable harm to a child's health and wellbeing; and

WHEREAS, studies show significant effects for children held in detention, including depression, post-traumatic stress, suicidal thoughts and behaviors, developmental delays, behavioral issues, and speech difficulties, and studies also show negative impacts on the parent-child relationship; and

WHEREAS, these family separations cause prolonged and toxic stress, which is associated with increased rates of physical conditions into adulthood, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, obesity, ischemic heart disease, diabetes, asthma, auto-immune disease, and cancer; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Nurses Association is committed to upholding our core value of advocacy, defined to include our promise to promote access to healthcare services for all people, foster improvement of health standards, and assist individuals and groups with health-restoring and health-supporting responses to actual or potential health problems; therefore



BE IT RESOLVED, the Alaska Nurses Association will work to educate members of Alaska's Congressional delegation on the damaging effects of the "zero-tolerance" which is inflicting health ailments on these children in the form of adverse childhood experiences; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will encourage members of Alaska's Congressional delegation to denounce the practice of separating families at the border and seek legislative solutions to this problem; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will remain actively committed to keeping children and their families together as they come to the United States fleeing violence from their home countries.



## **Resolution 2018-9**

### **Opposing Enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact Legislation in Alaska**

WHEREAS, the Enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact was enacted in January 2018; and

WHEREAS, this interstate compact is an agreement that allows mutual recognition of nursing licenses between member states in the United States and there are currently 31 states participating in the compact; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Board of Nursing is responsible for protecting the health and safety of the Alaskan public by regulating the practice of nursing in Alaska; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska is not a member of the Enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact and enjoys a strong, independent Board of Nursing funded through licensing fees; and

WHEREAS, agreeing to join the compact would amend nurse licensure in such a way that surrenders the state-level authority and sovereignty of the government of Alaska to a multistate authority called the Nurse Licensure Compact Administrators; and

WHEREAS, these administrators can make binding decisions on member states without being held accountable to any state of government; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Board of Nursing would be forced to accept the protocols, rulings, and regulations put forth by the compact, which may include allowing practice standards and licensing standards inferior to those established in the state of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, Enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact legislation presents barriers to all nurses, including obstacles to advancing practice authority and advocacy through collective bargaining, and by potentially suppressing wages, undermining worker and safety protections, and deteriorating working conditions through generalized –instead of community– standards; and

WHEREAS, additionally, joining the Enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact would affect an increase in the cost of licensing fees and licensing renewal fees to Alaskan registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, advance practice registered nurses, and certified nurse aides; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, the Alaska Nurses Association affirms its position that licensure for nurses in Alaska should be under the jurisdiction of the Alaska Board of Nursing; and



RESOLVED, AaNA strongly opposes Enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact legislation in the state of Alaska; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will educate stakeholders, including Alaskan nurses, employers, legislators, and the public at large to demonstrate how joining the compact would be harmful to Alaska.



**Resolution 2018-10**  
**Safe and Effective Nurse Staffing**

WHEREAS, medical errors are the third leading cause of death in the United States: it has been estimated that as many as 400,000 patients die each year as a result of preventable medical errors, and tragically, very little progress has been made in improving conditions since the Institute of Medicine's 1999 report "To Err is Human" first brought the problem to national attention; and

WHEREAS, hospital patients are also at risk for preventable infections and unnecessary complications that may prolong their stay and threaten their recovery; and

WHEREAS, many patients are discharged without adequate education on their medicines and treatment protocols, which may lead to unnecessary hospital readmissions; and

WHEREAS, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) attempts to fix these problems by creating payment systems that reward or punish hospitals based on readmissions, hospital-acquired infections, mortality, patient satisfaction, and other quality indicators; and

WHEREAS, to reclaim the promise of healthcare, we must make sure that frontline caregivers and staff are well-prepared and supported to provide safe, efficient, and high-quality patient care; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, the Alaska Nurses Association will support state and federal laws to set minimum standards related to the number of patients assigned to registered nurses for each healthcare facility and shift, with the ability to make upward adjustments based on a plan that takes into account factors such as acuity, skill mix, department layout, and patient population, and that such plans should be established by a nurse staffing committee composed of frontline caregivers in each healthcare facility; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will support laws that require healthcare facilities to establish nurse staffing committees that will be empowered to research, establish, implement, and review factors appropriate for increasing nurse staffing levels above the minimum levels established by law, and review of proper staffing levels for other health professionals and ancillary staff as well; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will advocate for and support laws that require healthcare employers to employ a sufficient number of registered nurses, with knowledge and expertise in the areas for



which patients are admitted, to provide safe, high-quality care and prevent adverse events and readmissions among the patients they serve; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will provide research and resources to assist locals in negotiating contract language establishing safe staffing levels and orientation policies that ensure proper nurse staffing, as well as language that requires healthcare facilities to regularly share data on staffing, patient satisfaction, and patient outcomes to enable nurses to assess current staffing needs; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will develop resources for locals designed to empower nurses serving on staffing committees through education about healthcare payment systems and other business factors that impact staffing, economic implications for staffing profiles, and evidence-based research linking nurse staffing to quality outcomes.



## **Resolution 2018-11**

### **Creating a Healthcare Workforce that Reflects our Community**

WHEREAS, the professional healthcare workforce does not reflect the diversity of our nation or state, nor the direction of population growth in the United States; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2013 report from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration, America's nursing workforce was 75.4 percent white, 9.9 percent black, 8.3 percent Asian, 4.8 percent Hispanic or Latino, 0.4 percent American Indian or Alaska Native, and the remaining listed as other; and

WHEREAS, Alaska consistently ranks among the most diverse states in America and has the highest American Indian and Alaska Native population of any state; additionally, Anchorage is home to the three most diverse neighborhoods in the country and the top 26 most diverse public schools in the country; and

WHEREAS, an increase in racial and ethnic minority health professionals provides greater opportunity for minority patients to see a practitioner who speaks their primary language or is from their own racial, ethnic, or cultural background, which can improve the quality of communication, patient safety, satisfaction, compliance, and outcomes; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that the professional healthcare workforce develops to reflect the rich diversity of our state and nation; therefore

RESOLVED, the Alaska Nurses Association will work to support the American Federation of Teacher's national task force charged with issuing recommendations for actions that can be taken at the local and state levels for creating a healthcare workforce that reflects the community being served and which creates a care and delivery system that eliminates rather than perpetuates health disparities; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will work to strengthen initiatives such as the successful Recruitment and Retention of Alaska Natives into Nursing program by the University of Alaska Anchorage School of Nursing, and will work with members and community leaders to develop and promote opportunities in the field of healthcare for persons of minority racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.





ALASKA NURSES ASSOCIATION

3701 EAST TUDOR ROAD, SUITE 208

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99507

Phone: (907) 274-0827 | Fax: (907) 272-0292

[www.aknurse.org](http://www.aknurse.org)