Making the Legislative Process Work for Missouri’s Nurses
The Missouri Nurses Association (MONA)

**Mission:**

The *vision* of the Missouri Nurses Association is to be one strong voice for Missouri nurses.

The *mission* of MONA is to promote, protect and enhance registered professional nursing practice through advocacy, education, collaboration and partnership.

The *purposes* of MONA shall be to act and speak for the nursing profession and to promote and enhance the accountability and control of nursing practice by the nursing profession.
Why MONA Needs to be Involved in the Legislative Process

• Everything you advocate for can be lost in the legislature by one vote
• Creating a more friendly environment for nurses
• Fight for and protect the nursing interests in the state of Missouri.
How a Bill Becomes a Law

- Introduced in the House or Senate or both
- Bill gets a hearing (proponents and opponents)
- Bill voted on in committee
- If Passed bill moves to legislative calendar
- Bill debated on floor
- Bill passes out of body and moves to other body
- Bill passes out of other body
- Bill goes to conference committee
- Same bill passed in both bodies
- Bill goes to governor for signature or veto
- If veto then potential override
- If signed, you have a new law

http://www.ci.arcadia.ca.us/home/index.asp?page=1135
Make-up of Missouri Legislature

- 163 House of Representative Members
  - As of 2011, 103 Republicans, 58 Democrats, 2 vacancies
  - It takes 82 votes to pass a bill in the House

- 34 Senate Members
  - As of 2011, 26 Republicans, 8 Democrats
  - It takes 18 votes to pass a bill in the Senate

As of 2011, the House and Senate are Majority Republican and the Executive Office of Governor is Democrat.
Successful Legislators are:

- Legislator
- Fundraiser
- Sales Representative
- Campaigner
- Lobbyist
- Listener
How Do We Shape This Legislative Process?

Through Lobbying

Missouri Nurses Association
Organized 1906
Lobbying is Not a Bad Word

- It’s your First Amendment right
- Your Legislators want to hear from you
- You have a right and duty to stand up for or against issues that affect you and all of the nurses in Missouri.
How to Effectively Lobby

- Be informed
- Be polite
- Reference the specific legislation by proper title (HB 761)
- Make it personal and talk about how this issue affects you
- Have a specific “ask”, know what you are asking them to support
- Follow up and remain in contact
Do Your Homework

- Voting constituents from home are head and shoulders above other groups
- Check your legislator’s website for meeting dates
- What awards have they received
- What bills have they introduced
- What committees do they serve on

ASK “WHAT DO WE HAVE TO DO TO PASS OUR LEGISLATION AND TO WIN?”
When to Lobby

- Before a Committee Hearing
- Before the vote
- While Legislation is being drafted
Avoid Lobbying When Inappropriate

- In a restaurant
- At church
- At a Senator’s child’s little league game
- USE COMMON SENSE
Remember You are the Expert

- Members and staff do not have time to understand every issue and detail
- You know what is happening in nursing in the clinic, in the hospital, and in other healthcare settings
- They rely on constituents and others to help educate them
- They want to hear your input and experience
Practice Makes Perfect

- Before lobbying make sure you know your issue
- Have notes for the key points you want to discuss
- Know your facts
- If you don’t know the answer to a question, tell them you don’t know and you will get the info and get it back to them. *Never make up an answer*
How to Make Contact

- Write a LETTER
- Make a CALL
- Schedule a MEETING
All Communications Should Be:

- Clear
- Concise
- Consistent
Face to Face is Best

- Do your homework
- Find their schedule (website, facebook, twitter)
- Introduce yourself
- Meet your legislator at home during the Interim
- Offer to serve as a resource for healthcare, specifically nursing issues
- Present a business card or contact information
- Follow-up note
Maintain a Relationship

- Once you have contact with a legislator stay in contact with them
- Send thank you notes
- Give them credit where credit is due
Your Efforts Make a Difference

- We need your voice
- We need your persistence
- We need your advocacy

The Missouri Nurses Association NEEDS YOU!
Resources for Further Information

- Visit the MONA website at: www.missourinurses.org
- Contact Kyna Iman, MONA’s Legislative Consultant at: kynaiman@earthlink.net
- Contact Jill Kliethermes, MONA’s CEO at: jill@missourinurses.org
- House & Senate contact: www.moga.mo.gov for Legislator Look-up info

If we don’t stand up for the nurses of Missouri, Who Will?