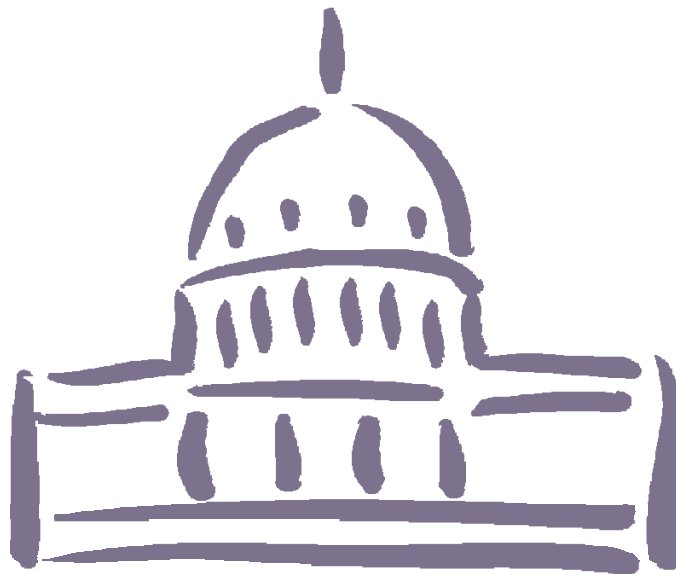


AORN's Grassroots Advocacy Handbook 2008-2009



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To join AORN's Grassroots Network: grassroots@aorn.org**

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AORN

Vision Statement

The Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN) is the leader in advocating for excellence in perioperative practice and healthcare.

Mission Statement

The Association of periOperative Registered Nurses' (AORN) mission is to promote safety and optimal outcomes for patients undergoing operative and other invasive procedures by providing practice support and professional development opportunities to perioperative nurses. AORN will collaborate with professional and regulatory organizations, industry leaders, and other healthcare partners who support the mission.

Who is AORN

Over 40,000 perioperative nurses from around the world have joined the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN). With a diverse population representing more than 40 different practice areas and over a dozen specialties, AORN members work in small, medium and large facilities including hospitals, ambulatory surgery centers, and private offices. AORN members work on the front lines, caring for patients undergoing operative and other invasive procedures from pre-surgery through surgery and recovery.

AORN's Legislative Priorities

2008-2009

The Association for PeriOperative Registered Nurses (AORN), through a robust grassroots network, promotes and responds to legislative issues that affect the practice of perioperative nursing and safety in the surgical environment. AORN grassroots members work collaboratively with healthcare colleagues, partners, and decision-makers to advance patient safety in all operative settings.

RN as Circulator: AORN maintains that every surgical patient deserves a perioperative registered nurse for the duration of any operative or other invasive procedure and actively promotes laws and regulations to ensure the supervisory presence of the professional RN in the perioperative setting both at the state and federal levels. AORN will seek support from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and other regulatory bodies to ensure that the RN in the circulating role is continually protected for patient safety.

Preserving and Protecting the Perioperative Registered Nurse's Scope of Practice: AORN will preserve and protect the perioperative nurse's scope of practice at the state level by working with the appropriate regulatory and legislative bodies for language regarding education, certification, regulation, supervision, delegated nursing functions, roles, responsibilities, and duties. AORN will monitor, evaluate, and respond to any proposed legislative initiatives by allied healthcare professionals that may affect the perioperative nursing scope of practice and profession.

RNFA Financial Reimbursement: AORN will monitor and continue to evaluate a U.S. congressional initiative to amend current laws or regulations to secure Medicare reimbursement for the services of RNFAs. AORN will investigate, analyze, and respond to opportunities at the state level to ensure reimbursement for RNFAs by third-party payors.

Supporting Workplace Safety and Patient Safety Initiatives: AORN will protect the health and safety of nurses in the perioperative setting by supporting legislative and regulatory initiatives that create and maintain a safe perioperative work environment that promotes safe patient care. AORN encourages legislative and regulatory efforts to establish an accountable and trusting patient safety culture that reflects individual and collective values, beliefs, behaviors, and skills in the operating room at the state and federal levels.

AORN's Grassroots Network

Grassroots is individuals coalescing around a specific issue using a common argument and/or message to achieve a common goal guided by a singular strategy.

EACH AORN MEMBER IS IMPORTANT IN AORN'S GRASSROOTS NETWORK.

Effective representation of AORN interests on federal and state public policy issues requires the active participation of individual members of our association. Every AORN member is a valuable member of AORN's Grassroots Network. To ensure that you and your colleagues are signed up to be a part of AORN's Grassroots Network, send an email to grassroots@aorn.org

WHO MAKES UP THE AORN GRASSROOTS NETWORK?

Five (5) Regional Coordinators, the Legislative Chair, and Board Liaisons make up the AORN National Legislative Committee (NLC). The NLC is charged by the Board of Directors with supporting the AORN grassroots network, promoting AORN's legislative priorities, and monitoring or responding to state and federal legislative and regulatory activity as it pertains to the practice of perioperative nursing. A state legislative coordinator is identified for each state and this individual serves as the link between the NLC, AORN members in that particular state, and AORN's Department of Government Affairs. State coordinators disseminate information and initiate action pertaining to national and state public policy activities in collaboration with the Department of Government Affairs. AORN's Legislative Grassroots Network is made up of AORN members who are prepared to support and take action on issues important to perioperative nursing.

WHY SHOULD I BE A MEMBER OF THE GRASSROOTS NETWORK?

Although the Department of Government Affairs monitors, analyzes, and responds to many legislative and regulatory issues that affect the AORN membership, the voice and support of local constituents "on the ground" is invaluable for a successful initiative. AORN will hire professional lobbyists in key states for proactive legislative initiative such as passing state laws that keep the registered nurse in the operating room and having a network of local experts ensures that the AORN lobbyist has immediate and specialized resources to promote the initiative. The prerequisite for effective representation is an organized, active grassroots network in your state. Although, AORN's Department of Government Affairs coordinates grassroots activities to advance public policy initiatives in the states, individual involvement by AORN members is crucial for a successful initiative.

WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT ABOUT MY INVOLVEMENT?

All members of the federal and state legislative bodies are concerned about the views and interests of all their constituents because support from constituents equals votes during elections. If legislators ignore any voters, they won't be in office for long. You may think you are only "one voice," but legislators believe you represent the interests of their nursing constituency. Each AORN member that contacts decision-makers on public policy matters contributes to the credibility and strength of the AORN legislative agenda. One phone call, one visit to the statehouse, or one personal meeting with a legislator is the only difference between a "novice" citizen lobbyist and an "expert."

WHAT DO I HAVE TO CONTRIBUTE TO DECISION-MAKERS THAT THEY DON'T ALREADY KNOW?

Your elected officials don't necessarily know more about complicated healthcare issues than you do. They certainly will not know more about perioperative nursing. Federal and state legislators cast thousands of votes on hundreds of bills each year. It's literally impossible for them to be "experts" on every major issue that comes to a vote. The profession you practice automatically makes you an authority on perioperative nursing. Federal and state legislatures deal with the big picture, and you can help your state and federal senators and representatives understand the effect their votes on broad policy has on your work. Representation for perioperative nurses cannot be assured in many healthcare policy proposals. If you do not become involved in the political decision-making process, you may not like the decisions made without your input. Speak out on behalf of your professional interests and your patients.

HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

The AORN Board of Directors directed the Department of Governmental Affairs to undertake the development of a major grassroots network to impact legislative decision makers at both the state and federal level. First, you can contact your chapter legislative committee chair or your state legislative coordinator and let them know you want to be involved. If your chapter does not have a legislative committee or a legislative contact person, volunteer to create a committee and be that contact person. Every chapter should be in regular communication with their legislative state coordinator or NLC Regional Coordinator. AORN's government affairs web site at <http://www.aorn.org/publicpolicy> contains a wealth of information on the latest state and federal public policy issues and AORN actions – Be sure to visit it regularly. Last, but not least, volunteer as an active member of AORN's Legislative Grassroots Network by submitting an email to grassroots@aorn.org that gives the Government Affairs staff and their representatives the right to contact you regarding legislative or regulatory issues. Remember that effective communications and political activity is a two-way process – be sure to communicate your grassroots activities to AORN.

Opportunities for Your Voice to Influence Public Policy

Grassroots lobbying is an effort by like-minded individuals acting to achieve a specific legislative or regulatory outcome. Lobbying activities by AORN members are an effective means of providing decision-makers and the general public with information and opinions on issues affecting the practice of perioperative nursing. Before any lobbying campaign can begin, grassroots members must become familiar with the legislative and regulatory processes.

(1) LEGISLATION – The legislative process at both the state and federal levels can be intimidating. Understanding the basics of how bills become laws is essential to any effort to affect public policy decisions through lobbying and grassroots networking. Although there are variations between state and federal legislative decision-making and terminology, the process is generally the same.

How a bill becomes law (simplified – see page 9 for more detail)

- Idea or Problem Identified
- Communication with Legislator – Could they sponsor the bill?
- Is there a legislative solution? Is there authority to govern?
- Draft Language – Assigned Number
- Introduction – Committee(s) Assignment
- Debate and Vote in Both Houses
- Governor's Signature

When and How to get involved in the process

- Be the Champion – contact your legislator with a concern and request their support.
- Be the subject matter expert by providing suggested bill language.
- Monitor proposed legislation to identify issues of interest.
- Visit, call, email, and write legislators to support your issue or oppose an initiative adverse to your interests.
- Attend open committee hearings. Be prepared to offer testimony.
- Engage your colleagues.

- (2) **RULEMAKING** – By law, each state and the federal government must involve the public in the administrative (rulemaking) process. This public participation is required by each state’s Administrative Procedure Act and requires rulemaking agencies to provide an opportunity for public comments and public hearings. The agency must consider and respond to all public comments submitted regarding the proposed or revised rules.

Opportunities for Grassroots Involvement

- **Issuance of New Rules**
 - To address a new issue
 - Can be proposed by anyone
- **Rule Review**
 - Every certain number of years
 - Any proposal for revisions must be addressed

When and How to get involved in the process

- Request to be on agency’s interested party notification list.
- Become familiar with the process for new rules and rule reviews.
- Submit written comments (use appropriate format)
- Attend public hearings and offer testimony (verbal or written)
- Contact agency and request that they consider a rule to address your particular concern.

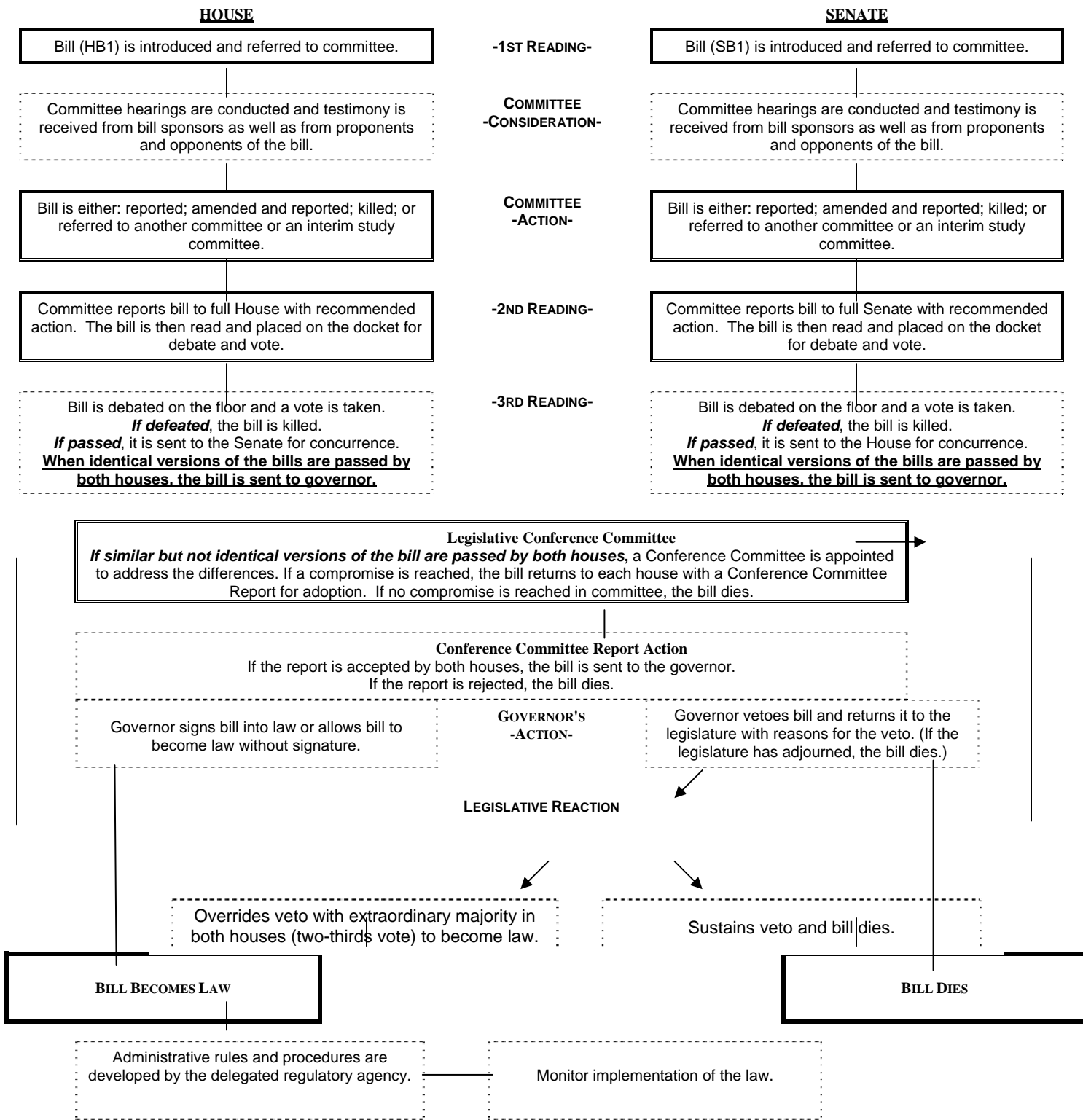
- (3) **AGENCY ACTIONS** – Regulatory bodies, such as Boards of Nursing, shape public policy through actions other than rule-making. The issuance of Guidance Statements, Declaratory Rulings, and Practice Guidelines can have a significant impact on how a certain entity is regulated.

Opportunities for Grassroots Involvement:

- **Issuance of Guidance / Position Statements**
 - Contact Agency
 - Identify Issue that Agency is Responding to
 - Identify and Specify Your Position
 - Offer Expertise

Legislative/Regulatory Basics

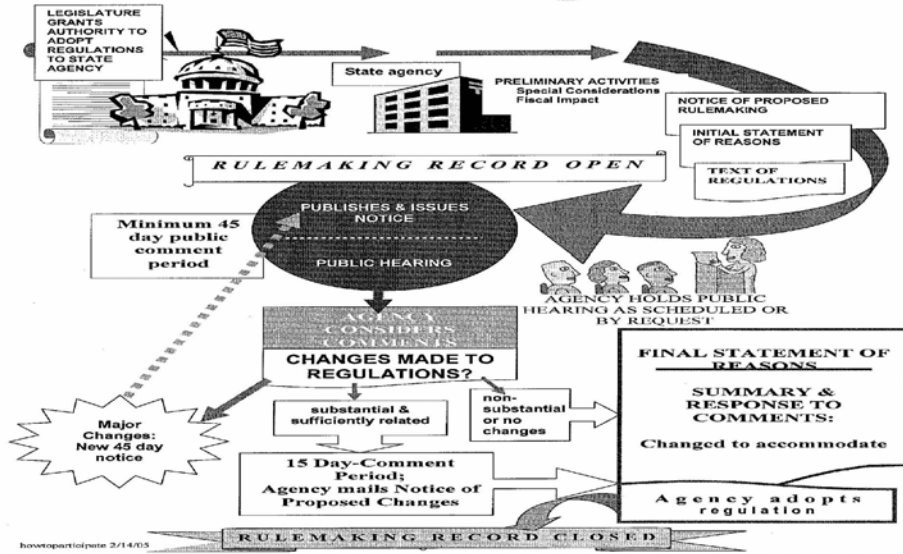
Legislative Process



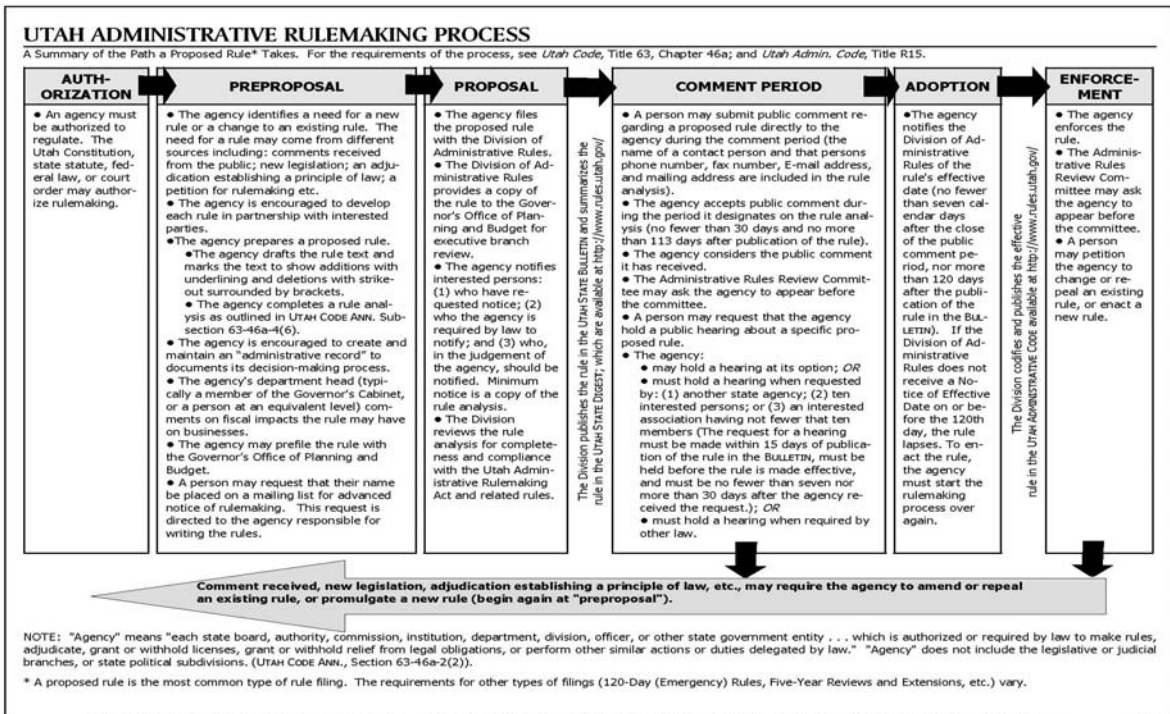
NOTE: BOXES BORDERED BY DASHES INDICATE POINTS IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS THAT CAN BE AFFECTED BY GRASSROOTS PARTICIPATION.

Samples of State Regulatory Processes

The Rulemaking Process



howtoparticipate 2/14/05



Utah Division of Administrative Rules • 4120 State Office Building • Salt Lake City, UT 84114-1201 • Phone: 801-538-3764 • Fax: 801-538-1773 • rulesonline@utah.gov

11/2006

Glossary of Public Policy Terms

Absent - Not present at a session.

Act - An enforceable law of the State. A bill that has passed both houses of the General Assembly becomes an Act through the Governor's approval, inaction, or a veto procedure.

Adhere - A step in parliamentary procedure whereby one house of the legislature votes to stand by its previous action in response to some conflicting action by the other chamber.

Adjournment - Termination of a legislative day upon the completion of business, with the hour and day of the next meeting being set prior to adjournment.

Administrative Rule - Any agency directive, standard, regulation or statement of general applicability that implements, interprets or prescribes law or policy, or describes the procedure or practice requirements of any agency.

Adjournment Sine Die - The final adjournment of a legislative session. The Latin translation is "without a day; an indefinite period".

Adoption - Approval or acceptance; usually applied to amendments, resolutions, and motions.

Amendatory Veto - The Governor returns the bill to the legislature with specific recommendations for change. The legislature may do nothing and the bill dies, the legislature may override the veto, or the legislature may accept the Governor's proposed changes and the bill becomes law.

Amendment - Formal proposal to change the language of a bill or resolution after it has been introduced.

Amendment, Committee - An amendment adopted by a committee when a bill is before that committee.

Amendment, Floor - An amendment adopted by the full house when the bill is on the order of second reading.

Appeal - A parliamentary procedure for testing (and possibly changing) the decision of a presiding officer.

Apportionment - Establishment of the legislative districts from which members are elected.

Appropriation - Funds allocated for various departments of government set aside by formal action for specific use. Allows money to be spent; is not actual expenditure record.

Approval by the Governor - Signature of the Governor on a bill passed by the General Assembly, whereupon the bill becomes an Act.

At-Large Election - An election in which candidates are chosen on an individual basis rather than as representatives of a geographically defined, single-member district. At-large elections can be held at the legislative and presidential levels. In the United State of America, some states hold at-large elections for congressional seats, when, for instance, a state's entire population warrants only one representative.

Author - The person (usually a legislator) who presents a bill or resolution for consideration; may be joined by others, who are known as coauthors.

Bicameral Legislature - A legislature consisting of 2 houses.

Biennium - A 2-year term of legislative activity by a legislature.

Bill - Legislation drafted in the form of an Act for introduction into a House of the legislature and identified with a bill number. If the bill is passed by both houses and signed by the Governor or otherwise becomes law, it becomes an Act.

Bipartisan - Having an affiliation or association with (or representatives of) both political parties or caucuses in a two party system.

Budget - (1) The suggested allocation of state moneys presented to the legislature for consideration; (2) a formal document that reflects the authorized expenditures of the state.

Calendar - The daily printed agenda of business for each house of the General Assembly. The calendar also contains scheduled committee hearings.

Call of the Senate or House - Procedure used to compel the attendance of members who are missing from the chamber and to compel those members already in attendance to remain in the chamber.

Capital - Refers to the capital city of the state.

Capitol - The Statehouse or Capitol building.

Carry-over Legislation - Legislation that is held over from the first year of a legislative biennium to the second year.

Caucus - An informal meeting of a group of legislators, most often called on the basis of party affiliation or regional representation.

Censure - An action by a legislative body to officially reprimand an elected official for inappropriate or illegal actions committed by that official while in office.

Chair - A designation of the presiding officer.

Chamber - Official hall for the meeting of a legislative body.

Clerk of the House or Senate - A non-legislator officer who is appointed or elected by the members of the House of Representatives or Senate to perform and direct the parliamentary and clerical functions of the chamber. Also may be titled "chief clerk" or "principal clerk."

Cloture - Process by which debate (or filibuster) can be limited in the US Senate, other than by unanimous consent. Under cloture, each Senator is limited to one hour of debate.

Committee - A body of members appointed by the presiding officer (or another authority specified by the chamber) to consider and make recommendations concerning disposition of bills, resolutions and other related matters.

Committee of the Whole - Either house of the legislature sitting in its entirety as a committee to consider bills or issues.

Committee Report - Official release of a bill or resolution from committee with (or without) a specific recommendation, such as "pass", "pass as amended" or "do not pass."

Committee Substitute - A bill offered by a committee in lieu of another bill that was originally referred to the committee for consideration; technically, the committee substitute is an amendment to the original bill.

Companion Bill - a bill which is identical to a bill having been introduced in the opposite house.

Concurrence - Agreement by one house of the legislature to an amendment added by the other house.

Conference committee - A committee composed of members from the two houses specifically appointed to reconcile the differences between House and Senate versions of a bill or bills.

Conflict of Interest - Untenable position that threatens the ability of a legislator to vote impartially due to some personal interest in a legislative issue.

Consent Calendar - A listing of non-controversial bills and resolutions. No debate is in order for any item on the consent calendar.

Constituent - A citizen residing within the district of a legislator.

Constitution - A written instrument embodying the fundamental principles of the State that guarantees powers and duties of the government and certain rights to the people.

Constitutional Majority - One more than half of the members of a deliberative body; actual number may be defined in the state constitution.

Co-sponsor - a sponsor of a bill or resolution who is not the principal sponsor.

Convene - To meet in formal legislative session.

Debate - To argue the merits of a legislative measure, pro and con.

Decorum - Proper order, etiquette, and conduct of members during a floor session.

Died in Committee - The defeat of a bill by the decision of a committee not to return the bill to the full house for consideration or vote.

Dilatory - Deliberate use of parliamentary procedure to delay.

Dissent - Difference of opinion; to cast a negative vote.

District - That division of the State represented by a legislator, determined on the basis of population.

Division - A method of voting; a request that members stand or raise hands to be counted when the outcome of a voice vote is unclear or in dispute.

Division of a Question - Procedure to separate a matter to be voted upon into two or more questions.

Doorkeeper - An official elected by the legislative house whose duties include controlling access to the floor of the chamber.

Do Pass - The affirmative recommendation made by a committee in sending a bill to the full house for final vote.

Do Pass as Amended - Passage recommended providing certain changes are made.

Effective Date - Date on which a Public Act takes effect. The effective date of a law is the date it becomes generally enforceable.

Emergency Clause - A statement in a bill that indicates the act shall take immediate effect.

Enacting Clause - The initial language in a bill saying "Be it enacted . . ." A successful motion to strike the enacting clause from legislation kills the bill.

En Bloc Voting - To consider several questions in a single vote or to vote as a unit on a particular question when all legislators are present and presumed to vote "yes" en bloc on consent bills.

Engrossment - The incorporation of amendments into a bill (or joint resolution) when a bill passes the house of origin and is sent to the second house. If not amended, the introduced version of the bill becomes the engrossed bill.

Enrollment - The processing of a bill (or joint resolution), incorporating all amendments, if any, when a bill passes both houses of the legislature. The enrolled bill is the document that is signed by both presiding officers and is then sent to the Governor.

Excused - Absent with the permission of the body or the presiding officer.

Executive Order - Action by the Governor in implementing his or her authority under the law.

Ex Officio - The holding of an office or the assumption of a duty by reason of holding another office. For example, "the president sat on the committee ex officio."

Expunge - An action that directs the removal of specific portions from the journal. This is applicable in situations where objectionable, inflammatory or incorrect matter has been included in the journal.

Filibuster - The prolonged discussion of a bill to delay legislative action.

Fiscal Note - A statement attached to a bill giving the estimated amount of increase or decrease in revenue or expenditures and the present and future fiscal implications of a bill.

Fiscal Year - A 12-month accounting period. For many states the Fiscal Year is July 1 to June 30.

Floor - That portion of a legislative chamber reserved for legislators, staff, and other persons granted access during Session.

Gallery - The balcony of a legislative chamber from which visitors may view proceedings.

General Assembly - The name of the legislative branch of many State governments responsible for enacting laws.

Germane - Relevant or appropriate. An amendment must be germane to the bill that it amends.

Grandfather Clause - Exemption from regulation for certain persons having engaged in the regulated activity for a specified period of time prior to the effective date of the regulatory legislation.

Gut and Stuff - A slang term which refers to removing the text of a measure and inserting entirely new language which, while it may change the nature of the bill completely.

Hearing - A committee meeting convened for the purpose of gathering information on a specific subject or considering specific legislative measures.

Hopper - Colloquial name given the repository for bills awaiting introduction.

Impeachment - Procedure to remove from office a public official accused of misconduct.

Incumbent - Incumbent refers to a sitting member of the legislature running for reelection.

Indefinite Postponement - A form of adverse disposition of a proposal for that session of the legislature.

Inexpedient to legislate - A vote indicating that the bill is dead.

Interim - The interval between regular sessions of the legislature.

Interim committee - A committee established to study or investigate certain matters between annual or biennial legislative sessions and to report to the next regular session.

Introducer - The person (usually a legislator) who presents a bill or resolution for consideration; may be joined by others, who are known as co-introducer.

Introduction - The formal presentation of a proposal after it has been drafted.

Item Veto - An action taken by the governor to prevent the enactment of an item of an appropriation bill; also may be called line item veto.

Joint Committee - A committee composed of members from both chambers.

Lame Duck - An elected official who has been defeated for re-election or who has chosen not to run for re-election but whose current term has not yet expired.

Law without signature - a Governor's way to make a personal statement of rejection of a bill without actually vetoing the bill.

Legislation - A document that proposes to create or change law.

Legislative Assistant (LA) - The professional staff member in a legislator's office in charge of a particular issue or issue area.

Legislative Council - non-partisan research staff that serves the legislature and staffs committee meetings.

Legislative Intent - The purpose for which a bill is introduced or passed.

Legislative Liaison - A person designated by an agency to represent the agency during the legislative process and assist members of the legislature in understanding programs or obtaining information relative to the agency.

Legislative Measure - Any matter brought before a house of the legislature for consideration, such as a bill, resolution, amendment, conference committee report, motion, or message.

Legislator - A member of the legislature.

Legislature - The branch of government that makes, amends, and repeals laws.

Line Item - Numeric line in an appropriation or budget bill.

Lobbyist - A person who represents a particular interest or group of interests before the General Assembly.

Lockout - The temporary disabling of the voting machine of any legislature who does not answer a quorum call before a record vote.

Majority Leader - In both the houses of the legislature, the member who is the second-ranking official. The Majority Leader is appointed by the Speaker or the President and is the key advisor to the Speaker or the President and the majority Caucus.

Majority Party - The political party having the greater number of members in a house of the legislature.

Member Elect - Member who has been elected, but who has not yet taken the oath of office or who is not yet officially serving.

Memorial - The method by which the legislature addresses or petitions Congress and other governments or governmental agencies; method by which the legislature congratulates or honors groups or individuals.

Minority Leader - In both the houses of the legislature, the Minority Leader is selected by the minority party and is formally elected by all members. The Minority Leader's responsibilities include appointing members to serve on committees, selecting assistant leaders and staff, and serving as spokesperson for the minority party.

Minority Party - The political party having the fewer number of members in a house of the legislature.

Minutes - Accurate record of the proceedings of a meeting in chronological order.

Moot - A term indicating that a motion is not timely because it can no longer affect an action or event.

Motion - A formal suggestion, usually oral, made by a legislator to a presiding officer calling for specific action by a house of the legislature, such as a motion to adopt an amendment or a motion to adjourn. After a motion is officially received by the presiding officer, it is acted upon by a vote of the house.

Municipality - A city, village, or incorporated town.

Non-concurrence - Situation where the other house has voted in a manner inconsistent with the house in which the matter now lies.

Non-partisan - Having no association or affiliation with a political party or caucus.

Nuclear Option - a method by which changes can be made to the standard parliamentary procedure of the United States Senate by a simple majority vote, contrary to the requirements of the written rules.

Oath of Office - Oath taken by members-elect of the legislature prior to being seated and embarking upon official duties.

Ombudsman - An official, usually appointed, charged with the duty of receiving and investigating public complaints, and directing action thereon by the responsible agency.

Omnibus Bill - A bill regarding a single subject that combines many different aspects of that subject.

Order of Business - The defined routine of procedure in a house of the legislature each day.

Out of Order - A ruling that a motion, an amendment, or a question is improper under the rules of the house.

Page - A person who works on the chamber floors, and occasionally in committees, to distribute materials, open doors, pass notes, and generally facilitate the legislative work flow. Honorary pages are guests of members who serve as pages for a day.

Parliamentary Inquiry - A question posed to the presiding officer for clarification of a point in the proceedings.

Parliamentary Procedure - The rules and rulings under which legislatures conduct their business.

Partisan - Associated or affiliated with a single political party or caucus.

Passage - Approval of a bill by the vote of the full house.

Patron - The person (usually a legislator) who presents a bill or resolution for consideration; may be joined by others, who are known as copatrons.

Per Diem - Literally, per day; daily expense money paid to legislators.

Point of Order - A statement by a legislator calling attention to an alleged breach of order or parliamentary procedure, upon which the presiding officer must rule.

Postpone - To delay consideration of a bill or resolution until a specific legislative day or hour of the same day.

Postpone indefinitely - a motion to kill a bill.

Preamble - In a bill, a statement of purpose or explanation that is inserted between the title and the enacting clause. A preamble in a bill does not become part of an Act, but a court may use it as a tool of statutory construction in ascertaining legislative intent. In a resolution, one or more explanatory clauses beginning with "whereas".

Precedent - Interpretation of rulings by presiding officers on specific rules; unwritten rules that are established by custom.

Prefile - To file a bill with a house of the legislature during a specified period of time before the opening day of a Regular Session. The bill is deemed automatically introduced on the opening day.

President - Usually, the title given to the person elected (or designated by constitution) as the presiding officer of the Senate.

Pro Tempore (Pro Tem) - The designated officer of the senate or house acting in the absence of the regular presiding officer.

Proviso - A clause in a bill that sets out specific exceptions to the general law.

Public Act - A bill that has been passed by the legislature and signed by the Governor (or otherwise has become law). After a bill has been signed by the Governor or otherwise becomes law, the Secretary of State assigns the bill a Public Act number, which is subsequently used to refer to the measure rather than the bill number.

Quorum - The required number of legislators present to transact business.

Ratify - To approve and make valid.

Reading - Presentation of a bill before either house of the Legislature by reading its title; a stage in the enactment of a law. In many states, each bill introduced must be read by title on 3 different days in each house before it is passed. The first reading introduces the bill. The second reading allows for floor amendments. A bill is voted on when called for third reading.

Reapportionment - Redrawing legislative district boundaries to provide equality of representation.

Recede - To undo action previously taken.

Recess - Intermission during a daily Session, usually for caucus or committee meetings.

Recommit - an action to send a measure to committee after it has been previously reported.

Reconsider (Motion to) - Action to retake a vote. The motion may be offered only by a legislator having voted previously on the prevailing side.

Re-enrollment - The final processing of a bill when the Governor has amendatorily vetoed the bill and the legislature accepts the Governor's proposed changes. Re-enrollment incorporates the Governor's proposed changes. The re-enrolled bill is presented to the Governor for certification.

Referral - The assignment of a legislative measure to a committee.

Referendum - The submission of a law, proposed by the legislature or already in effect, to a direct vote of the people.

Remonstrance - A protest by a legislator to a particular bill or measure.

Repeal - To delete and make of no effect.

Report - To communicate opinion or recommendations.

Resolution - Action, in the form of a formal legislative document, taken by one house alone or both houses jointly. A resolution does not change statutory or constitutional law and is not approved or otherwise acted upon by the Governor (and thus is not a law). The effect of a typical resolution is merely to express the opinion of one or both houses or to take some action short of enacting a law that is within the province of one or both houses. Also, a resolution is typically temporary in character.

Ripper Bill - a colloquial term applied to legislation designed to harm a particular person or bill.

Roll Call - To determine a vote on a question by the taking of names of those in favor and those opposed.

Rules - A code of procedure adopted by each house of the legislature to govern its operations.

Ruling of the Chair - A decision by the presiding officer concerning a question of order or procedure.

Section - The basic segment of a bill, with each Section being assigned a sequential number. Existing statutory law is also referred to by Section number.

Senate President - The presiding officer of the Senate, elected by the Senate from its membership.

Seniority - Recognition of prior legislative service.

Sergeant-at-Arms - An official elected by the legislative house whose duties include controlling access to the floor of the chamber.

Session - The period of time during which the legislature meets. The regular session is the annual (or biennial) meeting of the legislature required by the state constitution. A special (or extraordinary) session is a special meeting of the legislature that is called by the governor (or the legislature itself) and limited to specific matters.

Simple Majority - One more than half of those voting on a question.

Sine Die (pronounced "sign-ey die" or "sign die") - Literally, "without day;" usually, adjournment without a day being set for reconvening; final adjournment.

Skeleton Bill - A measure introduced with little or no substance. It will be amended at a later date to include substantive text.

Sponsor - The legislator who introduces a bill (or resolution). Other legislators may show their support by signing on as co-sponsors. The principal sponsor of a bill controls that bill.

Standing Committee - A committee appointed with continuing responsibility in a general issue area or field of legislative activity.

Status of Legislation - The progress of a bill or resolution at any given time in the legislative process.

Statutes - Individual laws that comprise the all the laws in a particular state.

Stop the Clock - The term used to describe the process of continuing business after a time deadline has passed.

Strike Out - The deletion of language from a bill or resolution.

Subcommittee - A subordinate committee composed of members appointed by the chair from the full committee. A subcommittee will consider a narrower range of topics than the full committee, and generally is authorized only to make recommendations to the full committee.

Sunrise Review - a systematic review of new or expanded regulation undertaken to ensure that the purpose of the regulation is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

Sunset Date - The expiration date of a law.

Suspension of Rules - Parliamentary procedure whereby an action can be taken that would otherwise be out of order.

Synopsis - A summary of the contents of a bill required to be attached to each bill upon introduction.

Tabling - Laying on the table or killing. Tabling removes a bill, resolution, or amendment from consideration.

Title of Bill - The caption of a bill that precedes the enacting clause and expresses the subject of the bill.

Transcript - A record of the actual floor debate that has taken place in one of the houses of the legislature on a legislative day, consisting of what is spoken by each legislator.

Unanimous Consent - A vote, by voice, expressing adoption of a bill without dissent or objection.

Unicameral - A legislature with only one chamber.

Verification - An action whereby a legislator requests that the results of a record vote be confirmed. The names of those legislators whose votes are to be verified are called, and if the legislator doesn't answer, his or her vote is stricken. However, the legislator's vote is restored to the roll if his or her presence is recognized before the presiding officer announces the final result of the verification.

Veto - The action of the Governor in disapproval of a bill sent to him or her by the legislature.

Veto Override - Vote by the legislature to pass a bill over a governor's veto.

Voice Vote - Oral expression of the members when a question is submitted for their determination. When asked by the presiding officers, members respond "aye" or "nay." The presiding officer then decides which side prevailed.

Vote - Formal expression of will or decision by a house of the legislature.

Vote Record - A roll call vote in which each legislator electronically votes "yea", "nay".

Whip - A term used at the federal level to refer to the deputy majority leader. It derives from the British fox-hunting term "whipper-in," which described the person responsible for keeping the foxhounds from leaving the pack.

Withdraw - To recall or remove a bill or question from consideration.

"Yea" and "Nays" - Positive or negative recorded vote of members on an issue.

Yield - The relinquishing of the floor by one legislator to another legislator to speak or ask a question during debate.

How to Communicate with Decision-Makers Regarding Public Policy Issues

Successful Office Visits

Visiting your federal or state legislator is the most direct way to have your voice heard. It can also be the most intimidating. But, remember legislators and staff are people just like you. And, more importantly, they depend on you to bring issues to their attention and to support them in elections. Remember, the difference between an activist or public policy advocate and the novice, is ONE visit. Following are some tips for visiting your legislator's office:

- ❖ Contact your Congressperson's office in advance for an appointment when she/he is working in district. Contact your state representatives at the state capitol during legislative sessions and at their district office during other times. You can obtain a copy of the current legislative session calendar for state legislators through the Government Affairs section of the AORN website at: <http://www.aorn.org/publicpolicy>
- ❖ Inform the scheduler about the topic you wish to discuss with your legislator and who will be accompanying you. If at all possible, pull together a group three people or less for the visit. A group that represents different experiences and backgrounds broadens your base and influence. Be sure to coordinate your remarks and discuss the agenda before your meeting. Select a spokesperson.
- ❖ Due to your legislator's demanding schedule, you will most likely meet with a legislative aide or "staffer". Don't underestimate aides/staffers. They often are well informed and knowledgeable on a specific issue.
- ❖ Come prepared. Know your representative's voting record and his/her position on the issue you will be discussing. Have background information on the issue and know the specific legislation relating to it. AORN Government Affairs staff usually has available a one-page summary of its legislative priorities and will assist you in preparing talking points for your issue prior to the meeting.
- ❖ Have two talks ready: one that is 15 minutes and another that is 90 seconds. This will ensure that you will be prepared if the legislator gets called out in the middle of your visit.
- ❖ At the visit be clear, positive, and constructive. Use examples from your personal experience.
- ❖ Before leaving, provide a definite request. Leave a short, one-page written summary of your position and supporting materials. Make sure your legislator knows how you want them to vote on a particular issue.
- ❖ Volunteer to be a local resource. Legislators often set up healthcare advisory panels consisting of local physicians, hospital administrators, insurance executives, consumers, and others, to provide them with the "local view" on major health policy issues. By volunteering to serve on these advisory groups, you will be in a central position to provide input. You can also volunteer to assist with an elected official's campaign by offering your time for phone calls, preparing mailings, and canvassing the local neighborhoods.

Effective Constituent Letters

A well written and constructed letter to policymakers is an important part of influencing legislation and can be written to voice either support or opposition. **It is suggested that all members with an interest in the particular legislation send individual letters rather than form letters.** If writing about an AORN legislative priority, be sure the view expressed is consistent with AORN policy. Of course, any citizen may send a personal letter to a representative advocating a personal opinion or point of view but you can only speak on behalf of AORN if your information is consistent with AORN position statements and guidelines.

- ❖ **Write early** – Begin to encourage approval/disapproval of a bill while it is in committee, if possible.
- ❖ **Identify yourself** – Let the reader know if you are writing on your own behalf or as a representative of an organization. Put your return address on the letter because envelopes are often discarded.
- ❖ **Identify your issue** – Do this right up front. Include the bill number and subject matter.
- ❖ **State your position** – Also try to do this up front when you identify the issue. For example, “I am writing to request your support for House Bill 1212 which requires reporting of hospital-acquired infections.”
- ❖ **Establish your credibility and expertise** - Let them know your professional credentials and years of experience. Be sure to communicate that you are a registered voter from his/her district.
- ❖ **Be brief** - Keep the letter to one page. If your background information or supporting material is lengthy, attach it as a separate, supporting document to the letter.
- ❖ **Use facts** – Facts will validate your position. Numbers and statistics are very persuasive but don’t overload the letter with them.
- ❖ **Be reasonable** – Be firm, confident, positive, and courteous but do not give the reader an ultimatum.
- ❖ **Use personal / human terms** – Don’t fill the letter with jargon; it will distract the reader. Add a short personal story to tie the issue to a real problem.
- ❖ **Ask for a reply** – Indicate that you would appreciate a reply containing the reader’s position on the issue.
- ❖ **Follow-up** – If the decision-maker proceeds in a manner that pleases you on an issue, express your gratitude with a thank-you letter or offer to provide support to them on other issues. On the other hand, if you believe the decision-maker has acted contrary to your interest, let them know but be polite.

Tips for Effective Phone Calls

State legislators can be reached at the state capital. If the legislature is not in session, legislative staff will have phone numbers of district offices. It's a good idea to get a legislative directory at the beginning of each legislative session. You can contact your federal Congressperson by phone at his/her district or Washington, D.C. office. Following are some tips on what to say on the phone.

- ❖ The administrative assistant will probably be the one to answer the phone. You can leave your message with him or her, or ask to talk with the legislative aide working on your issue. Make sure you get the name of the person with whom you are speaking.
- ❖ Identify yourself by name and hometown. Make sure you state that you are a constituent, registered operating room nurse and a member of AORN as well.
- ❖ Keep your call short and to the point.
- ❖ Identify the issue or bill (by bill number if you have it available) you wish to address.
- ❖ State your position and how you want your legislator to vote.
- ❖ Leave your name, phone number or address even if the person says it is not necessary.
- ❖ Follow-up your phone call with a short note to the staff member with whom you spoke, emphasizing your position and your appreciation of his/her attention to the issue. This can help build your relationship with the staff person and the legislator.

AORN's government affairs staff will be glad to assist you in preparing for meetings, letters, or phone calls. While we cannot always schedule your meetings for you, we can often provide you with background information, fact sheets on major federal and state policy issues, and helpful hints and suggestions about ways to approach individual members of federal and state legislators. In order to reduce duplicative or inconsistent information going to your local decision-makers, keep Government Affairs apprised of your legislative contacts and activity. Please call AORN's Department of Government Affairs at (800) 755-2676 or email govtaffairs@aorn.org for information on communications with legislators.

CONTACTING YOUR LEGISLATORS – DOs and DON'Ts

Do

LOOK AND ACT LIKE A PROFESSIONAL.

- Always address your legislator as “Representative” or “Senator” as a show of respect.
- Dress professionally and be polite when meeting with legislators or legislative staff.
- Keep your composure when attending or presenting at a legislative committee hearing.
- If you disagree with your legislator in a public forum, do so in a factual, objective way.
- Always present yourself as an intelligent, informed, and thoughtful nursing professional.

BECOME INFORMED.

- Educate yourself about the legislative process, the election process in your state, your state’s budget situation, and how your legislator votes.
- Confirm your resources with AORN before your meeting.
- If you do not know something, indicate that you will provide the information as a follow-up.

MEET WITH YOUR LEGISLATOR.

- Contact legislators during regular office hours or by appointment only.
- Focus on a single issue in your meeting. For different topics, set separate meetings, and watch your timing.
- Treat your legislator’s staff and friends with the same respect you would accord the legislator.
- Bring factual written materials with you to support your position.

REQUEST YOUR LEGISLATOR’S SUPPORT

- Be clear on what you are asking of the legislator (e.g., support for or opposition to a particular piece of legislation).
- “Request” is the operative word!
- Remember that political contributions only help you gain access to the legislator; they do not guarantee support.
- Stay positive with the legislator even if he or she is not initially supportive.

SUPPORT YOUR LEGISLATOR.

- Remember that you can endorse a candidate as an individual, but never as a representative of AORN.
- Always remain open to listen to another point of view. If you can establish the bill you are lobbying for as a bipartisan issue, you may be more influential.
- Keep the door open; keep communicating. This is all part of developing a respectful relationship.

Don't

ACT IN AN UNPROFESSIONAL MANNER.

- Never address a legislator as Mr. or Mrs.
- Avoid clapping, booing, and shouting matches at all legislative hearings or meetings.
- Never demonstrate your partisan views with legislators present—you may embarrass them, AORN, and yourself.
- Never attempt to embarrass a legislator in a public forum—it’s in bad taste and will often backfire.
- Never allow your conduct to reflect poorly on you, the nursing profession, or AORN. Keep in mind what you want to achieve.

MISSTATE FACTS OR REMAIN UNINFORMED.

- Never support or oppose a candidate without obtaining the facts about all the candidates. You may later find your candidate to be less qualified than the others.
- Never incorrectly state AORN’s position on issues. AORN must remain credible in the legislature; misstated positions will destroy that credibility.

OVERREACT OR ALIENATE.

- Never contact a legislator at odd hours—legislators need their sleep and family time like everyone else.
- Never mix your personal political concerns with health care issues.
- Never alienate a legislator’s staff or friends. These people may ultimately aid in the decision to support or oppose.
- Never “cry wolf”—legislators hear the wolf howling on most issues, and you may lose credibility if you overreact.

DEMAND OR INSIST ON YOUR OWN WAY.

- Never insist or demand that the legislator vote for/support or vote against/oppose a proposal.
- Never imply or demand that your political contributions buy a vote or legislative support.
- Never “burn your bridges” with a legislator. Although they may not support you today, you may need them tomorrow.

THREATEN OR PUNISH YOUR LEGISLATOR.

- Never threaten legislators with political reprisals such as withholding an endorsement or campaign contribution. If you want to defeat a legislator, look for other means, such as supporting another candidate.
- Never betray your legislator’s trust; it may cause potential allies to shy away or be wary of you in the future.

ALWAYS say “Thank you.” A letter of support and thanks after a vote will be long remembered!

Helpful Websites

General Information:

- <http://www.aorn.org/publicpolicy> – AORN's Government Affairs Web Site. This location provides information on AORN's public policy activities, including action alerts, the organization's legislative priorities, policy papers, a legislative database of pending nursing and healthcare legislation, a list of the NLC legislative state coordinators, and links to federal and state legislative web sites.
- <http://www.aorn.org> – AORN's homepage provides information on various organizational activities and perioperative nursing topics.
- <http://www.vote-smart.org> – Project Vote Smart's web site allows users to enter their home zip code to generate a list of and information on their state and federal legislators. This website also offers a great deal of information on the political process.
- <http://nursingworld.org/> - The American Nurses Association webpage with nursing and nurse advocacy resources.

Federal:

- <http://www.house.gov> - Information on the U.S. House of Representatives. This web site offers information on representatives, House committees and leadership, hearing schedules, and allows users to identify and contact their U.S. representative.
- <http://www.senate.gov> - Information on the U.S. Senate. This web site offers information on representatives, Senate committees and leadership, hearing schedules, and allows users to identify and contact their U.S. senator.
- <http://thomas.loc.gov> – This web site offers the option to search federal bills and provides other federal information.

State:

- <http://www.ncsl.org/public/sitesleg.htm> – The National Council of State Legislatures web site that provides links to state legislative web sites.
- <http://www.loc.gov/rr/news/stategov/stategov.html> – The state and local government information web site of the Library of Congress. Offers links to state legislative web sites.
- <http://www.statelocalgov.net/50states-legislature.cfm> - A directory of official state, county, and city government resources and issues.
- <http://www.ncsbn.org> – The web site for the National Council of State Boards of Nursing. Provides links to individual state boards of nursing, as well as state nurse practice acts and regulations.