



*From* PATIENT  
ADVOCACY  
*to* POLITICAL  
ACTIVISM

*AACN's Guide to Understanding  
Healthcare Policy and Politics*



American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
ADVANCING HIGHER EDUCATION IN NURSING

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# **AACN Guide to Policy Advocacy for Nursing Education and Research**

## **Introduction**

### *Nurses Are Their Own Best Advocates*

This book will strive to help nursing students, faculty, chairs, directors, and deans better understand the policy process, the issues facing nursing education, and how to participate in effective advocacy. The guide is designed to offer a refresher course on some basic civics with more complex themes related directly to nursing policy. Nurses make their own best advocates, and the goal is to raise the voice of nursing education from the “grassroots level.”

### *Lobbying is Not a Four Letter Word*

Although recent events have highlighted individuals, both lobbyists and elected officials, participating in unethical and distasteful behavior, it is important for nurses to realize that lobbying is critical part of our political process. The astounding work load and limited staffs of most Congressional offices mean that educated, knowledgeable outside experts are essential in the advancement of sound policy. Without the leaders in nursing education stepping forward to argue the case for improved funding, specific legislative language, and appropriate regulations, the profession becomes susceptible to policy made without regard for the needs of nursing education and practice. Therefore, it is critical that nurses understand the policy process and be engaged.

## Review of the Policy Process

All federal laws in the United States originate as **legislation** or **bills** in one of the two houses of Congress, either the **U.S. Senate** or the **U.S. House of Representatives**. Both the House and the Senate are further subdivided into a series of committees and subcommittees, which hold jurisdiction over specific policy areas.

A bill must be passed first out of committee by a majority vote, then placed on the legislative calendar where it will be on the “floor” for consideration by the full House or Senate. Generally, one of the last steps a bill undergoes before being voted on in committee is **mark-up**. During mark-up, committee members can offer additional amendments which, if passed, are added to the legislation before being sent to the floor. The bill must be considered in both houses of Congress and passed in each chamber before it can be sent to the President.

Because the politics and priorities can be vastly different between the House and the Senate, the bills created by the committees of jurisdiction are rarely an exact replica of one another. In the case where there are conflicting provisions between the bills, the House and Senate will appoint a **conference committee**. The conference committee is made up of members from both parties and from both the House and Senate. It is this special committee’s job to determine compromises on the differing provisions, and create a final version of the bill, which will be sent to the President.

The President can either sign the bill, establishing it as law; **veto** the bill, sending it back to Congress where it must pass by a 2/3 majority vote in order to become law; or pocket veto the bill, wherein the President passively vetoes a bill by not signing it for ten days while the Congress is **adjourned**. Note that if the President does not sign a bill within ten days, and

Congress remains in session, the bill becomes a law without the President's signature.

### *Types of Legislation*

Generally, legislation falls in to two different categories: **authorization** and **appropriations**. Authorization bills are those that establish laws or programs. Though these bills often contain recommended dollar amounts to be spent in specific ways, *they do not actually allocate funds*, or even guarantee that a certain amount will be spent on a program. Generally, most programs go through a **re-authorization** process every few years after their initial authorization. This process is used to modify many different aspects of a program, including adjusting authorization for appropriations based on inflation, extending or limiting a program, or changing the process by which the program is evaluated. For example, the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs in the Public Health Service Act were originally authorized in 1964 and have been reauthorized several times.

Appropriations bills, on the other hand, traditionally originate in the House of Representatives and provide spending authority for a single fiscal year (Oct. 1- Sept. 30) at a time. There are three basic types of appropriations bills which provide funding for most programs: general appropriations bills, which provide a budgeting authority for most federal agencies; supplemental appropriations, which are used to provide additional funding for a project during the current fiscal year (most recently these have been used to cover the expenses of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq); and continuing appropriations (sometimes referred to as continuing resolutions), which extend appropriations from one fiscal year into the next. This last tool is usually used when Congress is unable to agree in a timely manner on the subsequent year's appropriations for one or more agencies.<sup>1</sup> Occasionally, Congress may find it easier to pass a single piece of legislation

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.rules.house.gov/POP/approps\\_proc.htm](http://www.rules.house.gov/POP/approps_proc.htm)

with consolidated appropriations for a number of unrelated agencies. This is called an **omnibus**.

#### *AACN Relevant Congressional Committees*

While AACN works with numerous Congressional committees from time to time, there are seven main committees of jurisdiction that affect nursing education and impact the issues important to AACN members. The Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, and the Senate Finance Committee are the three most important Senate committees for AACN members.

The HELP Committee has jurisdiction for authorizations over the Public Health Service Act, including Title VII Health Professions programs which support nurses and other health professionals; the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs which represent the largest federal support for nursing education; and the Higher Education Act, which provides more general support to students and institutions. AACN constituents may be asked to interact with members of this committee on certain pieces of legislation that **amend** or reauthorize sections of the Public Health Service Act or the Higher Education Act.

The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies has jurisdiction over the appropriations process for various nursing programs, including those in the Public Health Service Act. AACN constituents will most likely be called on to interact with members of this vital committee to seek support for the appropriations bill in the early spring when the committee usually begins the appropriations process based on the budget established for the following fiscal year.

The Senate Finance Committee has jurisdiction over Medicare policy. Because Medicare policy often has a far-reaching

impact, AACN constituents may need to provide input to the Senate Finance Committee on education or practice issues facing the nursing profession from time to time. An example of this would include the efforts by AACN and several other national organizations in 2009 and 2010 to establish a Graduate Nursing Education program within Medicare to provide reimbursement for the clinical education of advanced practice registered nurse students.

In the House of Representatives, the most important committees for AACN advocates are the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health; the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies; the House Committee on Education and Labor; and the House Committee on Ways and Means.

Similar to the Senate HELP Committee, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health has jurisdiction over legislation in the House which impacts the authorization of nursing programs such as those in the Public Health Service Act, the National Institutes of Health, and the National Institute of Nursing Research. Likewise, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies oversee the funding process for nursing education programs.

The House Committee on Education and Labor creates other education policies which may impact schools of nursing and their students and employees. Finally, the House Committee on Ways and Means is similar to the Senate Finance Committee, and has jurisdiction over Medicare policy.

### *Regulation*

After a non-appropriations bill has passed both the House and the Senate, been “conferenced” if necessary, and been signed into law, the relevant agency begins the process of making **regulations** in addition to the language of the legislation to

structure the program. Congress often leaves some of the most important details for the implementation of a program up to the relevant agency. Generally in the case of nursing education, the relevant agencies include the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR), and the Department of Education.

Regulations are written by officials at the agencies, and then published for public comment in the *Federal Register*. From time to time, AACN may seek the assistance of our constituents to provide input during the public comment period on proposed regulations. Regulations are critical to the policy process because they are capable of greatly enhancing or impeding the success of a program.



## Knowing the Issues

As nurses, you already possess significant expertise regarding the profession, however understanding the issues related to federal policy is key to being an effective advocate. There are several persistent issues for nursing education and research, as well as other periodic items that may arise. Some of these consistent issues are outlined below.

### *Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act*

The Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs have supported the supply and distribution of qualified nurses to meet our nation's healthcare needs since 1964. Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs provide the largest source of federal funding for nursing education, offering financial support for nursing education programs, individual students, and nurses. The seven programs that comprise the Nursing Workforce Development programs support nursing education from entry-level preparation to graduate study, and favor institutions that educate nurses for practice in rural and underserved communities.

In collaboration with other national nursing organizations and nursing champions in the House and Senate, AACN works annually to determine and advocate for a suitable appropriations level for the Title VIII programs. AACN relies on the responses from our Annual Title VIII Student Recipient Survey, completed each winter, to assist in illustrating the need for continued increases in Title VIII funding to support nursing education.

AACN advocates may be tapped throughout the appropriations process to call or email the offices of their members of Congress to encourage support of these vital programs. Because a member of Congress' constituents serve as the "boss" (after all, it is the voters who decide at election time whether this person will have a place in Washington, DC or not) it is especially important that they hear from

nursing education constituents in their district—including students, staff, faculty, deans, and other academic leadership—on policy matters impacting nursing education.

From time to time, AACN may work to advance new programs for authorization under Title VIII. One example of this type of program is the capitation grant program AACN has been working to advance since 2003. Capitation grants are fixed sums of money given to a school of nursing for each student admitted in a given year. This money could be used to address the school’s specific needs—from training and retaining faculty, to recruiting students, to purchasing simulation equipment. This type of program was proven to be exceptionally successful in addressing the nursing shortage our country faced in the 1970s.

Fortunately, some of nursing’s strongest champions, Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Representative Nita Lowey (D-NY), have introduced the *Nursing Education, Expansion, and Development Act* in both the House and the Senate over the last several years. This legislation would amend Title VIII to create a capitation grant program, but unfortunately it has not managed to successfully pass through Congress.

#### *NINR Appropriations*

NINR is one of the 27 institutes that comprise the National Institutes of Health. NINR funds research in the science of nursing. The research funded through NINR is critical to nursing practice. The Institute was originally created as the National Center for Nursing Research in 1986, and formally became NINR in 1994. NINR has funded several landmark studies including studies on the risks of inadequate staffing levels, the improved outcomes for elders receiving transitional care after discharge from the hospital, gender-based differences in pain response, and reducing the risk of contracting HIV among young minority women. AACN continues to work for increased appropriations at this small but important Institute.

### *Higher Education Act*

The Higher Education Act (HEA) authorizes student programs funded through the Department of Education. Most recently, HEA was reauthorized in the summer of 2008, and advanced several important new initiatives for nursing education. The reauthorization included programs to address student capacity and the nurse faculty shortage, and includes authorization for an Institute of Medicine study to focus on these capacity barriers. Additionally, HEA recognized nursing as an “area of national need,” making nursing students eligible for special loan forgiveness and graduate study assistance programs. AACN continues to monitor these programs and other student aid programs through our participation in various higher education coalitions, and occasionally may ask members to contact Congress or comment on proposed regulations for programs at the Department of Education that acutely impact nursing education.

The issues outlined above over broad descriptions of AACN’s issues. AACN’s government affairs website, <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Government>, contains up-to-date specifics on the federal policy issues facing nursing education and research today.

## Participating in the Policy Process

The primary goal of this publication is to help AACN nursing education constituents and advocates improve their ability to access and participate in the policy process. As citizens, we have the Constitutional right to petition the government by contacting our elected officials and expressing views on policy.

### *Identifying Your Member of Congress*

The first step in participating in the process is identifying your Senators and Representatives. This can be done online by visiting AACN's website at <http://capwiz.com/aacn/home> and typing in your zip code, preferably for your school's address, though it is also helpful to collect the contact information for the members from the district in which you live (if it happens to be different from that of the school). This will provide you with pictures of your Senators and Member of the House of Representatives as well as links to more information about them and contact emails.

It is helpful to research your members of Congress by visiting their websites and identifying if they serve on relevant committees of jurisdiction for nursing education (see page 5 for more information on these committees). Even if your members of Congress do not serve on a committee with jurisdiction over nursing education and research issues, it is still helpful for you to build a relationship with them to help advance nursing education and research issues at the federal level.

### *Understanding the Role of Congressional Staff*

Senators and Representatives, as well as the committees they sit on, retain professional staff to help them cover the diversity of public policy issues they encounter. Often, Congressional staff may seem young, especially in comparison with the members they serve, but do not let that mislead you. The competition for these positions, which involve long hours and low pay, is strong. Congressional staffers are extremely

bright and hard working public servants. They cannot, however, be expected to be experts on every angle of every issue, which is why the role of the nurse as advocate is so critical. By developing a strong relationship with the staff, you become an expert resource for them on nursing issues.

Members of Congress entrust these staffers with constituent meetings, the careful consideration of policy proposals, and assistance in the process of drafting legislation, because there is simply too much work to be done on Capitol Hill for one member of Congress to accomplish on his or her own. The influence and importance of Congressional staffers cannot be overstated.

#### *The Value of Membership in a Professional Organization*

As news consumers in the United States, we hear often about the role “special interests” play in the policy process. Though this concept is frequently displayed in an unfavorable light, the value of professional organizations (especially nursing organizations) in advancing meaningful public policy process cannot be overstated. At AACN we prefer to think of nursing as being in the *public* interest, not a special interest. After all, with over 2.9 million nurses providing services to Americans in every possible care setting, it is hard to imagine a single person who does not know a nurse or understand the value that nurses bring to society.

One of the strongest ways to advance any issue in general is to combine voices to speak with a unified message. This is especially important for nurses who have historically been underrepresented as a profession in the policy process, particularly compared with their other health professions colleagues. One of the best ways to combine your voice with others is to consider active membership in a professional organization.

If you are a nursing student, staff, faculty member or a dean, director or chair at an AACN member institution, you are

already represented by our association. Other organizations you might consider becoming involved with include the American Nurses' Association, the National Student Nurses' Association, or one of the dozens of other specialty nursing organizations in the Nursing Community. More information about the Nursing Community and its members can be found at <http://thenursingcommunity.org>.

### *Using Capwiz*

From time to time, AACN will call on you as a nursing education and research constituent to contact your members of Congress and share with them your unique perspectives on a piece of legislation or a policy matter. Generally, AACN will use our online advocacy tool, Capwiz, to reach out to advocates alerting them of important changes in nursing education and research policy and asking them to take a moment to email and/or call their members of Congress to share insight on the matter. AACN uses Capwiz to make this process easy for advocates. The email from AACN will generally provide you with a link to "take action." Once you click on that link, you are directed to a webpage with a simple form letter that you can personalize and a space to input your address block. Even if you do not happen to know who your members of Congress are, Capwiz will be able to send them your message based on the zip code in your address block.

Responding to a Capwiz message takes only a matter of minutes (usually less than five), and makes such a difference for nursing education and research. AACN is able to use Capwiz to track those members of Congress we are contacting most frequently to follow up on issues of national importance. The Capwiz tool enables AACN nursing education constituents to participate in the public policy process in a meaningful and efficient way.

### *Letters, Emails, and Phone Calls*

From time to time you may find that you have a need to get in touch with your member of Congress outside of using

Capwiz. As mentioned above, you can always use the AACN website to locate the names, phone numbers, and email addresses for the pertinent staff members for your members of Congress.

In the back of this guide you will find a suggested template for writing letters to members of Congress as well as guidelines for how these letters should be addressed. When writing a letter, it is best to keep your remarks brief and concise. Be sure to be cordial in the message and to thank your member if they have been supportive of related issues through membership in the **House Nursing Caucus** or by sponsoring or signing on to nursing legislation. You can verify their membership in the caucus by checking the membership list available here:

**<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Government/NursingCaucus.htm>**. Additionally, you can check for your member's support of legislation found on the AACN supported bill list, here:

**<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Government/SupportedLegislation.htm>**.

If there is legislation under consideration which might alleviate the problem you are identifying, be sure to include information about this in your letter. Because of security concerns at Capitol Hill offices, it is advisable that you consider faxing or emailing your letter. Postal mail has to be specially processed and can take up to an extra week or more to arrive at the members' offices, so it is not efficient to use the mail when addressing an issue with a short turnaround time.

When sending an email to a member of Congress, the best solution is to use AACN's website to identify the email address for the member's health legislative affairs staff person. As mentioned previously, he or she will be the lead contact in the office on most issues related to nursing education and research, and has regular meetings with the Congressional

member on these types of issues. Likewise, when making a call to a legislator's office, it is best to ask to speak with or a leave a message for the person responsible for health issues. Again, it is a good idea to be brief in your message and remember to include a phone number or email address where you can be contacted.

### *Making a Visit*

Of course, the most effective way to influence your member of Congress is to visit in person. If you are a dean, director, or chair of a member institution, you have an opportunity to do this every spring and fall when you are in Washington, DC for AACN's semiannual meetings. If you are a student, staff, or faculty member, getting to Washington, DC may be a little more difficult, but you might consider making a visit to one of the district offices near your home or school. The district office locations and contact information can be found through Capwiz.

When planning a visit, it is best to make an appointment ahead of time, and expect that you will be meeting for 20-30 minutes with the health legislative affairs staff person, or another staff person with responsibility for nursing education and research issues. Because of their busy schedules, it is unusual to have a face-to-face meeting with your Senator or Representative.

Plan to dress professionally for your meeting, but don't be taken aback if the staff happens to be casually dressed. You may or may not share similar politics with the Senator or Representative, but it is important to remain polite and respectful. Chances are that the person you are meeting with has a favorable impression of nurses, and it is important to remember that you are representing all of nursing at your meeting.

When you arrive at the offices, be sure to sign in to the guest book, if one is offered. If you happen to have business cards, be sure to bring them with you because they will be very



useful to you in these visits. It is important to be prepared to talk about the challenges and successes facing nursing education and research. If you need help in coming up with specific legislation you can mention, please visit AACN's Government Affairs website or call the staff. During visits linked with the AACN semiannual meetings, we ask that the meeting topics stay focused on national issues with state perspectives, but you may want to make other visits to focus on state and local challenges.

Because your meeting will be relatively brief, it is a good idea to have a short agenda of items to address. Again, if you are unsure of which topics are the timeliest, consider consulting the AACN Government Affairs website. It is also a good idea to bring a few printed materials that can be left behind to provide more information about an issue. Avoid documents that are more than 3-4 pages long, as staff often do not have sufficient storage space for large documents or binders.

The staff you are meeting with may not know very much about nursing education and research, or understand all of the unique issues that impact collegiate schools of nursing. Your presence and voice are critical to ensuring that they are able to advance sound policy. Remember, you are their nursing education and research expert!

## Resources and Additional Readings

### *Literature*

Feldman, H. & Lewenson, S. (2000). *Nurses in the political arena*. New York, NY: Springer.

Kingdon, J.W. (2002). *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies*. New York, NY: Longman.

Mason, D., Leavitt, J., & Chaffee, M. (2006). *Policy and politics in nursing and health care*. New York, NY: Elsevier Science.

Mayhew, D.R. (2004). *Congress: The electoral connection*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

### *Periodicals and Websites*

#### *American Association of Colleges of Nursing*

AACN provides a number of resources on nursing education and research policy. Updates are published monthly in *Policy Beat*, an online newsletter. More information on nursing education, research, and practice issues can be found at

**<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Government>**.

#### *The Hill*

One of two daily (when Congress is in session) newspapers exclusively covering the news of Capitol Hill, *The Hill* can be found at newsstands in Washington, DC or online at **<http://thehill.com>**.

#### *National Review*

The *National Review* is a monthly magazine covering many policy issues from a politically conservative angle. It can be found at newsstands nationwide or online at **<http://www.nationalreview.com>**.

*The Nursing Community*

The Nursing Community, a working group of roughly 50 nursing organizations maintains a website with many policy resources. It can be visited at <http://thenursingcommunity.org>.

*Open CRS*

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) makes valuable research reports on a variety of policies for members of Congress and their staffs. Though the studies are paid for with public dollars, they are generally not available to the public. Open CRS is a free and privately run website which provides copies of a limited number of CRS reports for public consumption. Visit them here <http://opencrs.com>.

*Politico*

The *Politico* is a daily paper covering politics with a focus on national politics. It can be found in print or online at <http://www.nationalreview.com>.

*Roll Call*

One of two daily (when Congress is in session) newspapers covering the news of Capitol Hill, *Roll Call* can be found at newsstands in Washington, DC or online at <http://www.rollcall.com>.

*THOMAS*

THOMAS is the online legislation resource hosted by the Library of Congress. It is an excellent tool for looking up legislation to read the bill language or any summaries available. It can be found at <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

*The Washington Post*

One of the world's leading daily newspapers, *The Washington Post* does an excellent job of covering politics. It can be found on newsstands around the country as well as online at <http://www.washingtonpost.com>.

*The Washington Times*

The smaller and younger of Washington, DC's two daily papers, *The Washington Times* covers daily news including politics, from a more conservative view point. It can be found on newsstands in the Washington, DC area or at **<http://washingtontimes.com>**.

## Glossary of Terms

*Amend-* to add to an existing piece of legislation or law. Generally, an amendment changes, updates, or adds something to an existing piece of legislation.

*Adjourn-* to end a session of Congress. Generally, Congress enters a “recess” during holiday weekends and for the month of August, but adjourns near the end of the year to reconvene in January.

*Appropriations bill-* a piece of legislation which provides an agency with the authority to spend U.S. Treasury funds.

*Authorization, Re-Authorization-* a piece of legislation which provides the authority for an agency or program to exist, and directs its policies. A re-authorization is necessary when a program or agency is expiring or needs updating, and in some cases may be required annually.

*Bills-* a legislative proposal which becomes law once it passes the House and Senate and is signed by the President.

*Conference Committee-* a temporary group of Senators and Representatives established to negotiate and resolve differences between versions of similar Senate and House legislation.

*House Nursing Caucus-* generally, a caucus is an informal group of members with a common interest. Among the many caucuses in the House is the House Nursing Caucus, which works to advance policy to improve nursing education and practice. See <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Government/NursingCaucus.htm> for a list of current members.

*Legislation-* is the making of a law, or the actual law itself.

*Mark-up*- a meeting held by a committee to review the text of a bill before reporting it out. In some cases, many amendments to the bill are considered at this time. Most mark-ups end with a vote to send the new version, with the new amendments, to the floor for consideration by the entire body.

*Omnibus bill*- combines several diverse bills into one large bill. This tool is frequently used for appropriations, but can also be used for private relief, reconciliation, and claims bills.

*U.S. House of Representatives*- is comprised of members from each district in the 50 states, and non-voting delegates from the territories, including the District of Columbia. There are 435 voting members of the House who are elected to two-year terms.

*U.S. Senate*- consists of two Senators for each state, for a total of 100 Senators. Senators are elected to six-year terms.

*Regulation*- established by the agency they impact, regulations are the specific parameters by which a program is run.

*Veto*- the action by which a President of the United States refuses to sign into law legislation passed by both chambers of Congress. In the event of a veto, the bill returns the Congressional chamber in which it originated, where if it can pass by a two-thirds majority vote (290 votes in the House and 67 votes in the Senate), it becomes law without the President's consent.

## Appendix A

### Sample Letter

October 23, 2009  
The Honorable John Smith  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

As a constituent, I am writing to you today to seek your support for the Nurse Education, Expansion, and Development (NEED) Act (S. 497) sponsored by Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL). This legislation will significantly help ease the capacity barriers faced by schools across our state.

According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, U.S. nursing schools turned away nearly 50,000 qualified applicants last year due to an insufficient number of faculty, admission seats, clinical sites, classroom space, clinical preceptors, and budget constraints. In addition, many schools of nursing are literally crumbling since Congressional funding for infrastructure ceased in the mid-1970s. Compared to other academic disciplines, the cost of nursing education is relatively high. Schools require sophisticated laboratory equipment, computer software, and simulated hospital units to instruct students properly. Furthermore, nursing education is also faculty-intensive with a high ratio of faculty to students, on average 1:10, as mandated by state registered nurse practice acts.

Capitation grants have had a stabilizing effect on past nursing shortages. Notably, the Nurse Training Act of 1971 (P.L. 92-158) and the Nurse Training Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-63) facilitated increased enrollments in schools of nursing and resolved nursing workforce shortages.

Just as in the past, today's schools of nursing need additional resources to educate the next generation of nurses. The

flexibility of capitation grants under the NEED Act would complement and expand the existing authorities under Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act by providing nursing schools with the opportunity to improve the structural and programmatic conditions that inhibit student capacity growth.

Please consider cosponsoring the Nurse Education, Expansion, and Development (NEED) Act (S. 497).

Sincerely,

Jane P. Smith, MSN, RN  
123 Main Street  
Paducah, KY  
janepsmith@email.edu



## Appendix B

### How to Address a Congressional Letter

*When writing to a member of the House:*

The Honorable Mary Stone  
US House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative\* Stone:

\*In the event that the person to whom you are writing to is the chair of a committee, they should be addressed as Chairman or Chairwoman, or in the case of the Speaker of the House, as Speaker.

*When writing to a Senator:*

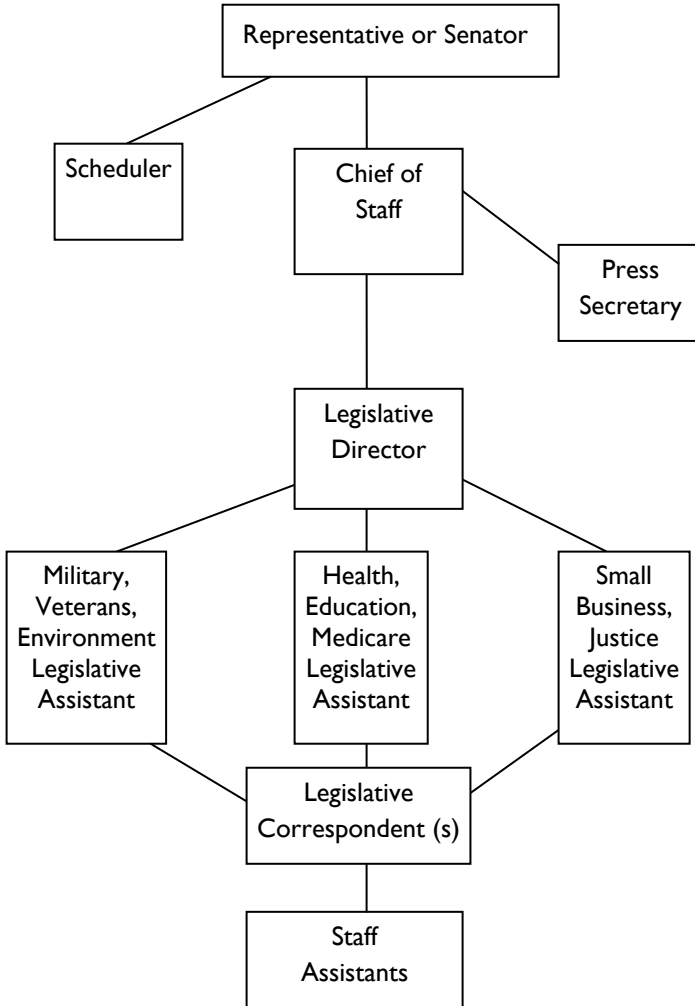
The Honorable John Jones  
US Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator\* Jones:

\* Again, in the event that the person to whom you are writing is the chair of a committee or majority or minority leader, it is appropriate to address them accordingly.

## Appendix C

### Sample Organization Chart for Congressional Office



Each office is organized independently and may have different issues assigned to each legislative assistant. This is meant merely as a guideline, based on of the organization of most Congressional offices.



American Association  
*of Colleges of Nursing*

One Dupont Circle, Suite 530  
Washington, DC 20036  
202-463-6930  
[www.aacn.nche.edu](http://www.aacn.nche.edu)