

Raise Your Voice, Write a Resolution

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2016-2017 CNSA Legislative Director

Two years ago, I attended the CNSA convention for the first time and witnessed the energy and enthusiasm that arises when hundreds of nursing students gather together to learn and make decisions. Participating in the House of Delegates was an enlightening experience. Students presented and defended different ideas in the form of resolutions, while others opposed and questioned those ideas. The presenters' goal was to convince the CNSA House of Delegates to adopt the proposed resolution. I did not understand it at the time, but have since discovered the impact of CNSA's support for an idea or cause.

It is the privilege and responsibility of all nursing students to advocate for patients and for the nursing profession. Considering the variety of areas where nurses can advocate, one crucial arena is with representatives at the State Capitol. Now more than ever, it is vital to have nursing voices heard and for nurses to influence the public discourse on Healthcare. Nurses are highly respected, and have opinions and expertise that can and will be sought out as nurses connect with elected representatives and engage in conversations.

Many nursing students want to participate and make a difference, but just do not know where to begin. Writing a resolution and presenting it at the annual CNSA Convention is a simple yet powerful way to start. When advocating alone, a nursing student can make a difference. However, when speaking with the weight of a professional organization with 6000+ members, the impact of a single student is magnified and multiplied!

When considering a resolution's topic, it is important to select a position you are passionate about. At a recent CNSA Membership Meeting, participants separated into groups and

had conversations about several healthcare-related topics including creating safe drug use sites, having abortion services provided at CSU and Community College campuses, requiring all health professional student or interns to be paid for their clinical hours, providing free feminine hygiene products in all private and public school bathrooms, and changing the healthcare system in California to a single payer system. It was inspiring to hear the ardor, arguments, and advocacy for and against these healthcare-related topics. What made the discussions even more relevant was that each of these ideas is a bill being considered by the 2017 California State Legislature. If you participated in those conversations or if one of these issues speaks to you, I strongly encourage you to act on that feeling and make your voice heard by submitting a resolution about it! If you are passionate about a different topic, I likewise encourage you to take it to the next step and write a resolution.

As nursing students, speak up and share our unique and important nursing perspective. Students not only advocate for the health of patients but also advance the image of nursing by helping all nurses take a more prominent place among healthcare professionals. I hope each of you will begin to engage in the public discourse on health care and work to develop your professionalism. Resolutions are a great way to begin getting involved! Please visit <http://www.cnsa.org/2017-resolutions-toolkit> or contact me today at cnsalegislativedir@gmail.com to learn more about submitting a resolution. I look forward to hearing from you!