ONA Promotes Nurse Appointments to State Boards and Commissions

WHEREAS Oregon's government structure is designed for citizen engagement through appointment to more than 250 boards and commissions, and

WHEREAS The voice of nurses is underrepresented on boards and commissions, even ones that have dramatic impact on practice and patient safety. For example, many nurses have been dissatisfied with the Oregon Health Authority's failure to enforce the Oregon nurse staffing law throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, however no nurses sit on the Oregon Health Policy Board which serves as both the policy-making body and oversight board for the Oregon Health Authority, and

WHEREAS The profession of nursing impacts many facets of government, not only nursing but also education, veterans affairs, volunteerism, emergency response, chemical dependency and behavioral health, services for the poor, women and minority affairs, criminal justice and services for people with disabilities, all of which have boards or commissions where nurses can have a substantive impact and where the input of Oregon Nurses Association would be beneficial to the citizens of Oregon, and

WHEREAS The governor's office of appointments to boards and commissions is constantly searching for candidates to fill positions on boards and commissions, however many Oregonians, including most nurses, do not know how to engage in or become appointed to boards or commissions, and

WHEREAS the American Nurses Association is a founding member of the Nurses on Boards Coalition, a coalition with a mission to improve the health of communities through the service of nurses on boards and other bodies. This coalition is committed to increasing nurses' presence on and influence on corporate, health related and other boards, panels and commissions. By supporting Oregon nurses to engage with and serve in positions on commissions, Oregon Nurses Association aligns more closely with this policy goal of the American Nurses Association, and

WHEREAS civic and government engagement has been an important part of the profession of nursing, as stated by Lillian Ward, American nurse pioneer, she was a key figure in establishing public health nursing, home health nursing, school nursing and was a labor organizer and civil rights activist in the late 19th and early 20th century. In the book she wrote about her life's work, Lillian explained that her organization was able to establish lasting social change in cooperation with government officials, stating that "Governors and legislators listen and sooner or later act on the representations of responsible advocates whose facts are current and trustworthy."

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED the staff and member leaders of the Oregon Nurses Association will work together to identify and overcome barriers to appointment and service on boards and commissions. This will include but is not limited to the formation of a work group to promote nurse appointments to boards and commissions, ongoing engagement with the governor's office on appointments to boards and commissions, the creation of workshops or classes for nurses to attend to learn how to become appointed to a board or commission and ongoing support for
members who are pursuing appointment or who are actively serving as an appointee on a board or commission.

Reference


