NLAC Update: NOVEMBER 2020

NLAC met virtually in October to share members' individual legislative agendas, get a legislative overview of the upcoming session, and hear from the Board of Nursing and key health stakeholders Texas Medical Association and the Texas Hospital Association. After the meeting, NLAC representatives were sent a survey to finalize the 2021 Nursing Legislative Agenda, which will be publicized on NLAC's web page soon.

The survey also revealed that 100% of respondents indicated that their organization participation in NLAC has been beneficial. One member stated "This is a great organization for Texas nurses. We stay informed regarding legislative nursing issues as well as all nursing issues. I believe we are the only state that has this group."

The 2021 Texas Legislature could be pivotal for addressing important nursing concerns from education funding to workplace advocacy and prevention of violence to numerous other issues that affect the profession. There is strength and influence in numbers. Now is the time for professional nursing organizations in Texas to come together and work with the Texas Legislature to improve and protect the nursing profession and healthcare for all Texans.

Enrollment for 2021-2022 NLAC membership opens this month. Invoices will be sent to NLAC primary representatives, and we will reach out to share the benefits of NLAC membership with professional nursing organizations in Texas that are not yet members. Now is the time to rejoin NLAC and encourage other Texas professional nursing organizations that aren't yet members to join us in amplifying the voice of nursing at the state Capitol. The upcoming legislative session is ripe with opportunity and frontline health care workers have an important perspective to share with state lawmakers.

Interested organizations should visit the NLAC web page for information.
The election results, at least on the state level, are in. This extremely unusual election year had no shortage of surprises. While the Governor and the Lieutenant Governor were not on the ballot this time around, many expected Democrats to make gains in the House and Senate—some even considered Texas a battleground state. While the Democrats did pick up a key Senate seat, the House was a different story.

Texas Senate

Taking over the Texas Senate was a long shot for Democrats, but by changing one seat (electing Democrat Roland Gutierrez for the seat held by Republican Pete Flores), they now have significant impact on the Senate.

In order to bring a bill to the floor, there needs to be a three-fifths supermajority of Senators in favor. Last session, Republicans had the exact number of senators they needed. Now Republicans will have to either work across the aisle or change the rules to get around the three-fifths threshold requirement. We'll be keeping an eye on how discussions progress next session.

Texas House

Unlike the Senate, Democrats were extremely hopeful that they could take over the majority in the House. Polling showed that Democrats had a real shot at flipping the nine seats they needed. However, as was the case in other states, polling did not paint a full picture of how Texans would ultimately vote. Democrats managed to flip one House seat, replacing Sarah Davis with challenger Ann Johnson. However, Republicans also flipped a seat, as Mike Schofield took his seat back from Representative Gina Calanni. In other words, the election was a wash in the Texas House.

Speaker of the House
The other major news from this election is that Representative Dade Phelan announced he has the necessary votes he needs to become the next Speaker of the House. The formal vote cannot take place until the legislature convenes in January, so nothing is set in stone, but it appears that his strongest opposition has dropped out of the race. We will certainly keep everyone in the loop if anything changes — so stay tuned!

Bookmark Texas Tribune to get the latest political news!

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Texas Register: Rules and Regulations

* No pertinent rule updates in this edition

Remember …
- You can find the Texas Register on the Texas Secretary of State website, where ALL the rule proposals and adoptions from the Texas BON and other state regulatory agencies are updated weekly on Fridays and published. Nursewatch will print some of the more pertinent updates to nursing rules and regulations but you can delve deeper into current and past issues of the Texas Register at your leisure on the S.O.S. website.

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Upcoming Events

- **November is Home Care & Hospice Month** - In recognition of the innumerable nurses, home care aides, therapists and social workers making a difference for the patients and families they serve. These caregivers play a central role in the health care system and in homes across Texas and the country.
- **Partnership for a Healthy Texas 87th Legislature Session Virtual Briefing**, 12-2 p.m. Nov. 10, 2020, via Zoom. Register here.
- **Nursing Issues in the 87th Texas Legislature (TNA Nurse Talks Empowerment Series)**, 6 p.m. CST Nov. 12, 2020, via Zoom. Details and registration here.
• **NLAC Virtual Legislative Workshop**, Jan. 23, 2021, via Zoom. Virtual event to share the 2021 Nursing Legislative Agenda with nurses and nursing students in Texas. Details and registration will be available soon.

• **2021 Nurse Day at the Capitol - Virtual**, 1-4:30 p.m. CST Feb. 8, 2021, via Zoom. Virtual event where Texas nurses convene to learn about Texas’ current health landscape and how nurses can influence policy for Texans. The agenda includes public health updates from state health leaders and legislators, and opportunities for advocacy training as well as a chance to speak with legislators from their area. Register [here](#).

*If your NLAC organization/association is having an open event or you know of a relevant activity/event, please send the information to TNA Government Affairs Coordinator [Catherine White](mailto:Catherine.White@tna.org) for inclusion in upcoming issues of Nursewatch.*

Contribute to the Texas Nurse PAC today and strengthen nursing’s influence with the Texas Legislature in 2021. There has never been a more important time to support nursing’s efforts to engage and inform Texas legislators on issues and concerns of the profession. **Pledge $20 in 2020,** the Year of the Nurse. **Invest** in your profession. **Invest** in your peers. **Invest in the Texas Nurse PAC today!**

*Donations to Texas NURSE PAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for Federal income tax purposes.*

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