



Legislative Summary of the 2010 Session

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The nine week legislative session concluded with little fanfare on Friday April 30, 2010. Tensions were running high after a challenge budget negotiations, the Governor's veto of a couple of leadership priority bills, and Charlie Crist's announcement that he will run for the U.S. Senate as an independent.

While this year was a challenging year for FNA, we did see some successes.

Care of Diabetic Children in Schools - SB 896/HB 747 by Senator Durrell Peadar and Representative Nick Thompson. We successfully lobbied to amend HB 747 to eliminate the requirement that school nurses train other school employees on the care and treatment of diabetic children. Naturally, school nurses work with the schools to accommodate the needs of these children and provide a safe environment; but school nurses cannot be expected to fully train other employees to provide care for these children who have complicated health care issues. The bill which has been presented to the Governor simply prohibits school districts from requiring students to attend specific schools based on their diagnosis. Additionally, children who are independent with their care, may carry their own supplies.

Regulation by Board of Nursing -HB 1337/ SB 2530 by Representative Denise Grimsley, RN and Senator J.D. Alexander. We successfully lobbied to include the proper definition of nurse accrediting

agencies so that only NLN-AC and CCNE are acceptable. If a program is accredited by one of those two agencies, the program will essentially be exempt from the Board of Nursing's jurisdiction. We also successfully lobbied to permit nursing education program to obtain NCLEX scores by student name for self-evaluation purposes. Schools will be prohibited from distributing this private information, but will be able to use it to evaluate their own program success. This bill has been signed into law by the Governor.

State Employees

We successfully protected state employed health care professionals from proposed pay cuts. Unfortunately our colleagues at the state have not had a raise in five years now, but we did manage to avoid a pay cut this year. We also lobbied against state employees being required to contribute to their retirement plan and this issue was touch and go for a while, but ultimately the legislature decided not to require a contribution from employees.

Medicaid Reform

The House and Senate both proposed expansion of the Medicaid Reform which is currently up and running in Broward, Duval, Clay, Baker, and Nassau counties. The reform is essentially that all Medicaid recipients are placed in Medicaid HMOs. There has been some cost savings, but also significant debate and concern regarding access to care as well as provider and recipient satisfaction. The Senate passed a bill which would have expand the Medicaid reform to 19 counties and the House attempted to gain support for expansion to all 67 counties. There was extensive discussion on the expansion, but ultimately the House and Senate agreed that the issue needs to be even more discussion on the proposal before it is implemented. You should give some consideration to how your practice would be affected by these proposals and be prepared for the issue to come up again next year.

Florida Center for Nursing

During budget negotiations, the funding for the Florida Center for Nursing was eliminated from both the House and Senate budgets. While this was not a huge surprise, we have been working hard to keep some level of

funding in the budget. While the funding for this year has been eliminated, the Center still exists and now, more than ever, is your support critical. Please visit the Center's website to see how you can help: www.flcenterfornursing.org. Executive Director, Mary Lou Brunell is more committed than ever to maintaining the Center as the premier source of nursing workforce information.

Safe Staffing- SB 114/ HB 377 by Senator Dave Aronberg and Representative Ron Bris. This bill requires acute care centers to have collaborative councils with participation of direct patient care RNs. The councils will develop a staffing plan for each individual patient care unit based on the ANA principals on staffing. This bill was not heard during the 2010 session.

Controlled Substance Prescribing by ARNPs - SB 188/ HB 677 by Senator Mike Bennett and Representative Juan Carlos Zapata. This bill would permit ARNPs to prescribe controlled substances to their patients who need them. This bill was not heard during the 2010 session.

Keep your eyes on your email as we begin to strategize for the 2011 session and for elections this fall. We will be evaluating candidates and endorsing those candidates who support our issues. Start developing your own relationship with local candidates and legislators. See the FNA website for more information.

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