

Well, it's been another busy week at the Capitol. There have now been over 700 bills filed and there are still many more ideas floating around.

ARNA's legislative priority AUTHORIZE THE ARKANSAS MEDICAID PROGRAM TO RECOGNIZE AND ADVANCE PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSE AS A PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER has been filed as HB1254 sponsored by Rep. Jeff Wardlaw-(R) of Hermitage and Rep. Michelle Gray-(R) of Melbourne.

House rules state, all Scope of Practice bills must sit and no action may be taken on them during the first fifteen days after the last day of filing. This means, amendments in the language or to add sponsors cannot be made until February 15th.

During this time, I have been gathering sponsors to add to the bill and also securing the votes to pass out of committee. We will need eleven votes to pass out of the House Public Health committee. I have asked Rep. Wardlaw and Rep. Gonzales to talk to the Chairman, Jack Ladyman to run this bill first, which will hopefully be on the 15th, although I have not heard that the Chairman has granted this request.

I have also been working on a VoterVoice message for ARNA members to send to legislators, a video message featuring Angela Anderson with a message to legislators is in production, and a mail piece that will be dropped into Districts when this bill goes to the full House. Additionally, I am working with the Arkansas Center for Nursing on a flyer to handout at the Capitol entitled: Myths vs. Truths.

When HB1254 goes to the full House, I will need the membership to call and email your legislators to ask for their support. This email will be crafted for you so that legislators will hear a unified message from every ARNA member. This will show the strong power of the Association behind this bill.

STAY TUNED FOR YOUR CALL TO ACTION!! AND PLEASE VOLUNTEER TO HELP

ARNA's other two legislative agenda items for 2021, the task force on Acuity and Workplace Violence bill are also moving as well.

Senator Dave Wallace -(R) of Leachville has with the attorneys who draft bills, namely the Bureau of Legislative Research, our draft bill and our edits to the Acuity task force, which I should have in my hand this week, for Board approval.

Rep Lee Johnson, MD-(R) of Greenwood has expressed running his bill from last session regarding workplace violence again, and Rep. Joe Cloud, retired MD-(R) of Russellville has offered to be added as a co-sponsor. This bill is the same as the 2019 bill that has been shared to members and it is ready to drop at any time. [Please click on the following link to review HB1613 of the legislative session, 2019. https://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/Bills/FTPDocument?path=%2FBills%2F2019R%2FPublic%2FHB1613.pdf](https://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/Bills/FTPDocument?path=%2FBills%2F2019R%2FPublic%2FHB1613.pdf)

During these busy weeks at the Capitol, I will be hosting a nursing call each week on Monday at 6:30. The call in number is: 712.770.5505 ACCESS CODE: 877385#. We need you to call-in to stay informed and to participate in the discussion.

Also, anytime anyone would like to come to the Capitol to talk with your legislator, please call me and we can make that happen. If you are not sure which legislator represents your district, please go to the www.arna.org website, click on Advocacy and Find my legislator.

Respectfully submitted,

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