

# AWHONN Federal Legislative and Policy Agenda

Town Hall Webinar

October 5, 2022



**AWHONN**

PROMOTING THE HEALTH OF  
WOMEN AND NEWBORNS

# Housekeeping Notes:

- All attendees are on mute.
- We will leave time at the end of the presentation for questions. Please submit questions via the Q&A application throughout the presentation.
- Please feel free to use the chat feature to communicate with your fellow attendees throughout the presentation. The speakers will only be checking the Q&A for questions.
- All AWHONN webinar attendees are expected to abide by the [Virtual Code of Conduct](#).
- If you have technical difficulties, please try to log in using a different browser.
- We will be recording this presentation and will make the recording available on the AWHONN website.
- There are no nursing contact hours available with this presentation.



# Questions

Questions we are unable to address during this webinar may be submitted to:

[advocacy@awhonn.org](mailto:advocacy@awhonn.org)



# Presenters

Sharon McCoy MSN, CNS, RNC-OB, C-ONQS  
Chair, AWHONN Public Policy Committee

Robyn D'Oria MA, RNC, APN  
AWHONN Public Policy Committee

Seth A. Chase MA  
AWHONN Government Affairs Director



# Town Hall Agenda

- Process for developing the Federal Legislative and Policy Agenda
- The Public Policy Committee's recommendations to the Board for 2023
- Open forum



# 2022 Federal Legislative and Policy Agenda

[www.awhonn.org/](http://www.awhonn.org/) > Media, Advocacy & Journals > Advocate > 2022 Legislative Priorities

**AWHONN's Mission**  
Empower and support nurses caring for women, newborns and their families through research, education, and advocacy

**2022 Federal Legislative and Policy Agenda**

AWHONN represents the interests of 350,000 nurses working in women's health, obstetric, and neonatal nursing across the United States. The items listed below represent our legislative and policy priorities for 2022.


**Empower and support nurses:**

- Ensure strong nursing representation by a culturally, racially, and gender diverse group of nurses on state, federal, and other policy-making bodies, task forces, advisory boards, working groups, and maternal mortality review teams that address women's health, neonatal health, and obstetric issues, especially by nurses who are Black, Indigenous and people of color
- Support federal efforts to eliminate the scope of practice barriers for advanced practice registered nurses (nurse practitioners, certified nurse midwives, clinical nurse specialists, and certified registered nurse anesthetists) to practice to the full extent of their education and training to meet the increasing demand for primary care and women's health services
- Support federal efforts to increase and enhance the nursing workforce, promote nursing as a profession, and promote and support diversity in the profession that better reflects and represents the communities they serve. These efforts should also support staff retention and reduce student loan debt burden for nurses, including expanded access to federal aid and decreased tuition costs
- Support for training and equipment to protect nurses on the job and their patients, such as by funding for personal protective equipment, workplace violence prevention training and interventions, and safe staffing levels

**Caring for women, newborns, and their families:**

- Advocate for health equity to improve outcomes and access to high-quality, equitable, and necessary services for marginalized populations, including women and birthing people who are
  - Incarcerated or detained, including those who are pregnant
  - Living in poverty or low income
  - Experiencing a substance use disorder
  - Black, Indigenous, LatinX, immigrants, and members of historically neglected groups
  - Military members or veterans
  - Currently trafficked or are at risk for human trafficking
  - Excluded for their gender identities or relationship status
  - Disabled
- Advocate for unrestricted access to preventive health care services such as annual well-woman visits; counseling for reproductive life planning; HPV vaccination; mammograms; cervical cancer screenings; pre-, inter-, and post-conception care; screenings for intimate partner violence, elder abuse, substance use, human trafficking, and mental health; and smoking cessation programs


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**AWHONN's Mission**  
Empower and support nurses caring for women, newborns and their families through research, education, and advocacy

- Support initiatives to allow access to a wide range of evidence-based contraceptive options for women who seek them, including
  - Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) for women of all reproductive ages, including adolescents
  - Unrestricted over-the-counter access to hormonal contraceptives (to include oral contraceptives, vaginal rings, the contraceptive patch, and depot medroxyprogesterone acetate injections) that are low cost and available to people of all ages without restrictions
  - Full contraception coverage by all insurance payers with no out-of-pocket expense
- Support initiatives to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality and improve the health status of women, as well as policies designed to increase funding to address racial health disparities, structural and social determinants of health, and resolve health inequities contributing to these issues. Support for legislation and funding to address the effects of systemic racism and environmental factors on maternal health and outcomes, including supporting innovative programs and interventions
- Support initiatives to reduce infant mortality and improve the health status of newborns, critically ill infants, and preterm newborns, as well as policies designed to increase funding to address racial health disparities, structural and social determinants of health, and resolve health inequities contributing to these issues. Support for legislation and funding to address the effects of systemic racism and environmental factors on newborn health and outcomes, including supporting innovative programs and interventions
- Support legislation aimed at establishing mandatory federal parental family leave in recognition of the positive impact of family leave on breastfeeding outcomes, parental-child bonding, gender equity, and retaining women in the workforce
- Support requiring an extension of Medicaid coverage to one year across all states because birthing people continue to die from pregnancy-related causes up to a year postpartum
- Support federal efforts to reduce instances of gun violence and improve gun safety. Intimate partner violence is a leading cause of death amongst women and often gets worse during pregnancy. Limiting access to guns to abusive partners would improve women's safety
- Support for access to adoption counseling services for parents who are considering adoption and post-adoption counseling services for birth parents who place their children for adoption
- Support for legislation that would prohibit workplace and employment discrimination against, while also requiring reasonable accommodations for, pregnant individuals in the workforce
- Support federal efforts that promote a healthier and more resilient nursing workforce

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# Position Statements

[www.awhonn.org/](http://www.awhonn.org/) > Media, Advocacy & Journals > Position Statements

<https://www.awhonn.org/news-advocacy-and-publications/awhonn-position-statements/>

The screenshot displays the AWHONN website's navigation and content. The top blue navigation bar includes links for "Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses", "NURSING CAREERS", "STORE", "CONTACT US", "DONATE", "LOG IN", a search icon, and a "JOIN" button. Below this is a white navigation bar with the AWHONN logo and menu items: "About Us", "Education", "Professional Development", "Media, Advocacy & Journals", "Industry Partners", and "Membership". The main content area features a large banner image of healthcare workers in blue scrubs with the text "AWHONN Position Statements". Below the banner, a list of position statements is shown, including "Access to Health Care", "Advanced Cardiac Life Support in Obstetric Settings", "Breast Cancer Screening", "Breastfeeding (Under Revision)", "Confidentiality in Adolescent Health Care", and "Continuous Labor Support for Every Woman". On the right side, a sidebar menu lists "News, Advocacy and Publications", "AWHONN Position Statements" (which is highlighted), "< Journals", and "Practice Briefs". A blue chat icon is located at the bottom right of the sidebar.



**Advocate for ~~Ensure~~** strong nursing representation by a culturally, racially, and gender diverse group of nurses on state, federal, and other policy-making bodies, task forces, advisory boards, working groups, and maternal mortality review teams that address women's health, neonatal health, and obstetric issues, especially by nurses who are Black, Indigenous and people of color





Support federal efforts to eliminate the scope of practice barriers for advanced practice registered nurses (nurse practitioners, certified nurse midwives, clinical nurse specialists, and certified registered nurse anesthetists) to practice to the full extent of their education and training to meet the increasing demand for primary care and women's health services



Support federal efforts to increase and enhance the nursing workforce, promote nursing as a profession, and promote and support diversity in the profession that better reflects and represents the communities they serve. These efforts should also support staff retention and ~~reduce—eliminate financial barriers to nursing education student loan debt burden for nurses, including expanded access to federal aid and decreased tuition costs.~~



Support for training and equipment to protect nurses on the job and their patients, such as by funding for personal protective equipment, workplace violence prevention training and interventions. ~~and~~ Support for safe staffing levels for nurse safety and patient well-being that promote optimal outcomes.



~~Support federal efforts that promote a healthier and more resilient nursing workforce.~~



Oppose legislation and regulations to limit compensation of nurses. Efforts to adequately staff hospitals should focus on meeting the market pay necessary to attract and retain qualified staff, including a qualified nursing workforce



Advocate for health equity to improve outcomes and access to high-quality, equitable, and necessary services for marginalized populations, including women and birthing people who are

- Incarcerated or detained, including those who are pregnant
- Living in poverty or low income
- Experiencing a substance use disorder
- Black, Indigenous, LatinX, immigrants, and members of historically neglected groups
- Military members or veterans
- Currently trafficked or are at risk for human trafficking
- Excluded for their gender identities or relationship status
- Disabled



Advocate for unrestricted access to preventive health care services such as annual well-woman visits; counseling for reproductive life planning; HPV vaccination; mammograms; cervical cancer screenings; pre-, inter-, and post-conception care; screenings for intimate partner violence, elder abuse, substance use, human trafficking, and mental health; ~~and~~ smoking cessation programs, **treatment for ectopic pregnancy and spontaneous, missed, therapeutic, or elective abortion.**



Advocate for access to all reproductive services,  
including abortion care.





Support initiatives to allow access to a wide range of evidence-based contraceptive options for women who seek them, including

- Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) for women of all reproductive ages, including adolescents
- Unrestricted over-the-counter access to hormonal contraceptives (to include oral contraceptives, vaginal rings, the contraceptive patch, and depot medroxyprogesterone acetate injections) that are low cost and available to people of all ages without restrictions
- Full contraception coverage by all insurance payers with no out-of-pocket expense



Support initiatives to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality and improve the health status of ~~women~~ **pregnant and birthing people**, as well as policies designed to increase funding to address racial health disparities, structural and social determinants of health, and resolve health inequities contributing to these issues. Support for legislation and funding to address the effects of systemic racism and environmental factors on maternal health and outcomes, including supporting innovative programs and interventions



Support initiatives to reduce infant mortality and improve the health status of newborns, critically ill infants, and preterm newborns, as well as policies designed to increase funding to address racial health disparities, structural and social determinants of health, and resolve health inequities contributing to these issues. Support for legislation and funding to address the effects of systemic racism and environmental factors on newborn health and outcomes, including supporting innovative programs and interventions.



Support legislation aimed at establishing mandatory federal parental family leave in recognition of the positive impact of family leave on breastfeeding outcomes, parental-child bonding, gender equity, and retaining ~~women~~ parents in the workforce.



Support legislation aimed at protecting, promoting, and supporting breastfeeding including access to no-cost prenatal breastfeeding education and no-cost postpartum lactation support. This includes support for pumping protections for lactating families who return to the workplace.



Support ~~requiring an extension~~ of expanding Medicaid coverage to ~~one~~ a full year ~~across all states because birthing people continue to die~~ ~~from pregnancy-related causes up to a year~~ postpartum for all birthing people.



Support federal efforts to reduce instances of gun violence and improve gun safety. Intimate partner violence is a leading cause of death amongst ~~women~~ birthing persons and often gets worse during pregnancy. Limiting access to guns to abusive partners would improve women's safety



Support for access to adoption counseling services for parents who are considering adoption and post-adoption counseling services for birth parents who place their children for adoption





Support for legislation that would prohibit workplace and employment discrimination against, while also requiring reasonable accommodations for, pregnant individuals in the ~~workforce~~ workplace



# Open Forum

Please raise your hand to ask a question or make a comment.

We will be sending out the slides and a link to this recording after the call is completed.

For more information, email [advocacy@awhonn.org](mailto:advocacy@awhonn.org) or visit <https://www.awhonn.org/advocate/>.

