

Nurse SHIFT Change Advocacy Toolkit

A guide for nurses and allies to take action for a more humane, ethical, science-driven, and socially just healthcare system.



Advocacy Toolkit

This toolkit includes the following resources:

- Take Action: Contacting Your Representatives
- Email Template to Federal Delegation
- Op-ed Template
- 3-Minute Testimony for Public Hearings
- Schedule a Meeting with Your Federal Representative



Take Action: Find & Contact Your Representatives

Your voice matters! Contacting your elected officials—especially as a constituent and healthcare professional—is one of the most powerful tools you have in shaping policy.

Whether you're asking for support on a bill, requesting a meeting, or sharing your story, the first step is knowing who represents you at the federal level.



Find Your U.S. Senators and Representatives

Use any of these trusted tools to look up your members of Congress by entering your address or ZIP code:



Quick Links

-  Common Cause – Find Your Representatives
<https://www.commoncause.org/find-your-representative/>
-  Congress.gov – Members of Congress
<https://www.congress.gov/members>
-  Vote411.org – League of Women Voters
<https://www.vote411.org/>
-  USA.gov – Contact Elected Officials
<https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials>



Pro Tip for Reaching Out

- That you're a nurse or healthcare professional (or supporter)
- That you're a constituent in their district/state
- A brief personal story or fact connecting to your message
- A clear, specific ask (e.g., "Support legislation that enforces safe staffing ratios")



Your Story + Your Vote = Real Power

Don't underestimate the impact of a personal message from someone working on the frontlines of care. Nurses bring ethics, humanity, science, and social justice to the table—and that's exactly what our policy system needs.

Email Template to Federal Delegation

Subject: Support Ethical, Evidence-Based Policies that Center Patients and Nurses

Dear [Representative/Senator] [Last Name],

I am writing to you as a [nurse/healthcare professional/constituent] committed to advancing a more humane, ethical, and just healthcare system. As part of the Nurse SHIFT Change Movement, I stand with thousands of nurses nationwide who are calling for transformative policies rooted in science, ethics, and a deep commitment to human dignity.

Our current system often forces providers to choose between what is right and what is permissible under policy—especially when access to care, staffing levels, and social determinants of health are overlooked. We urge you to support legislation that:

- Protects access to equitable, affordable care by strengthening Medicare, Medicaid, and other safety net programs.
- Invests in primary and preventive care as a scientific, cost-effective strategy for improving health outcomes.
- Supports the nursing workforce through safe staffing ratios, protections against workplace violence, and efforts to build a more diverse and resilient profession.

These priorities are not political talking points—they are ethical imperatives. Nurses are the backbone of our healthcare system, and we ask for your leadership in creating a healthcare future where science guides decisions, social justice is prioritized, and humanity is never secondary to bureaucracy.

Thank you for your time and your public service.

With respect,
[Your Name]
[Your Address]
[City, State, ZIP]
[Your Email]
[Your Phone Number]

Op-Ed Template

Title: A Nurse’s Call for Ethical, Evidence-Based Healthcare Reform

By [Your Name]

As a nurse, I was trained to care for patients with compassion, uphold the ethical codes of our profession, and rely on science to inform every decision. But too often, I find myself working in a system that places politics before patients and efficiency before equity. It’s time for a SHIFT.

The Nurse SHIFT Change Movement is about more than policy—it’s about people. We are a grassroots collective of nurses and healthcare professionals pushing for systemic change grounded in humanity, ethics, nursing expertise, science, and social justice.

We call for:

- Equitable access to care, because healthcare is not a privilege—it’s a human right.
- Scientific investment in preventive and primary care, which we know reduces suffering and saves lives.
- Protections for nurses, whose working conditions directly impact the quality and safety of care patients receive.

These are not radical ideas—they are evidence-based, justice-centered, and long overdue.

We are trained to advocate for patients at the bedside. Now we are advocating at the policy level, because we know the system needs more than patchwork fixes. It needs a shift—toward dignity, ethics, and justice for all.

About the Author: [Your Name] is a [credentials, e.g., registered nurse, nurse practitioner] and a member of the Nurse SHIFT Change Movement. They have worked in [location/type of healthcare setting] for [X years], where they’ve seen firsthand how policy impacts patient care.

3-Minute Testimony for Public Hearings

Opening:

Good [morning/afternoon], and thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is [Your Name], and I am a [nurse/healthcare worker/advocate] with [X years] of experience. I'm here today as part of the Nurse SHIFT Change Movement, a growing, nationwide coalition advocating for a more ethical, science-based, and just healthcare system.

Body:

In my work, I've seen how policies that ignore the social and economic realities of patients can lead to suffering, preventable illness, and even death. One example: [Insert a short, anonymized story that illustrates a patient harmed by lack of access, poor staffing, or systemic inequity.]

As nurses, we are trained to act on evidence, to center human dignity, and to make decisions based on the ethical principles of our profession. But our ability to do that is often constrained by policy that doesn't reflect the science—or the lived realities—of the communities we serve.

We are calling for:

- Equitable access to care through strong public health infrastructure and well-funded safety nets.
- Investment in primary care to prevent disease before it becomes crisis.
- Workforce protections that respect nurses as essential, not expendable.

Conclusion:

This is about more than budgets and policy. It's about whether we will build a healthcare system rooted in ethics, science, and justice, or continue to let inequity and inaction harm the most vulnerable.

I urge you to lead with humanity. Support legislation that reflects the real needs of real people. Nurses are ready to partner with you in making that future a reality.

Thank you for your time and attention.

How to Schedule a Meeting with Your Federal Representative (In-District or Virtually)

Whether you're advocating as an individual or part of a group, **meeting directly with your member of Congress or their staff is one of the most impactful things you can do.** Here's how:

Step-by-Step: Scheduling a Meeting in Your Home District

- 1. Look Up Your Representative's Contact Info**
 - Use Congress.gov or Common Cause to find their official website.
 - Go to the **"Contact"** or **"District Offices"** page to locate the scheduler's email or phone number.
- 2. Reach Out to the District Scheduler**
 - Email is usually preferred. Use the sample email below to request a meeting.
 - You can request to meet **in person at their local office** or **virtually over Zoom or phone.**
- 3. Be Flexible, Clear, and Courteous**
 - Suggest a few possible dates and times.
 - Be specific about what you'd like to discuss (e.g., nurse staffing, access to care, workforce protections).

Sample Meeting Request Email

Subject: Request for Meeting with [Representative/Senator] [Last Name] – Constituent Nurse

Dear [Scheduler's Name or "Office of Representative/Senator [Last Name]"],

My name is [Your Name], and I'm a nurse and constituent living in [City, State, ZIP]. I'm writing to respectfully request a meeting with [Representative/Senator Last Name] during the next in-district work period.

I'd like to speak with them about important healthcare priorities, including safe staffing, access to care, and support for the nursing workforce. I will be representing myself and speaking from my professional and lived experience.

I am available [insert 2–3 date/time options], and I am happy to meet in person at a district office or virtually if that's more convenient.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to the opportunity to speak.

Sincerely,

[Your Full Name]

[Your Address]

[Your Phone Number]

[Your Email Address]