President’s Message

WVNA Q2 Board Meeting

April 22, 2025

As we enter the second quarter of 2025, I want to begin by reflecting on what has truly been one of the highlights of our year so far, Nurses Day at the Capitol and our Celebration of Nurses event. It was an incredible honor to host and connect with so many nurse leaders, student nurses, practicing nurses, and allies from across West Virginia. The energy, passion, and unity on display reaffirmed the strength and potential of our profession. I want to extend my deepest gratitude to Julie Huron, our CEO, for her tireless efforts in organizing and executing such a meaningful and successful pair of events. Special thanks also go to Vice President Jodi Biller and President-Elect Lya Stroupe for their thoughtful leadership and planning as part of the event committee.

A sincere thank you as well to Eric Small, Chair of the West Virginia Nurses PAC, for facilitating a powerful and timely discussion on key issues facing nursing and healthcare in our state. We’re also grateful to Luke Velickoff, Jodi Biller, Rhonda Parker, Roger Carpenter, Brenda Issac, and Brittany Brogan. Their dialogue highlighted our legislative and policy priorities. They also brought professional challenges into sharp focus while inspiring continued action.

On the policy front, I’m proud to report that the 2025 legislative session brought meaningful progress for nursing in West Virginia. We helped successfully defeated a bill that would have weakened childhood immunization laws, and we made great strides in advancing full practice authority for Certified Nurse Practitioners and Certified Nurse Midwives. Perhaps most notably, Senate Bill 810, which removes direct supervision requirements and enhances the autonomy of Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists, passed both chambers (At the time of this writing the bill is awaiting the governor’s signature. These wins resulted from strong advocacy and relationship building. Credit goes to our Health Policy & Legislative Committee, led by Lya Stroupe, Beth Redden, and Brenda Issac.

As we look ahead, we are entering a season of both strategic focus and renewal. It’s also a time to exhale, reflect, and prepare for what lies ahead. In June, Julie Huron, Josh Thumm, and I will attend the ANA Membership Assembly. Several important bylaws changes are on the agenda. These include the potential formal inclusion of LPNs into ANA; a development we've proudly helped pilot here in West Virginia. Our July retreat will provide space for fellowship, planning, and updates from the HP&L Committee.

Please remember that membership dues increases are taking effect this year based on your renewal date. This planned adjustment helps ensure the financial sustainability of both WVNA and ANA and supports the critical work we do year-round.

Finally, I want to thank each and every one of our members for their continued support, advocacy, and presence in this work. I encourage you to stay engaged, donate if you are able, and most importantly, invite a friend or colleague to join WVNA. We are stronger together, and your voice matters. Looking ahead, we will hold elections for Secretary and Vice President this fall. Please watch for the call for nominations. Consider which leaders might be ready to serve in these important roles.

In unity, with empathy

Dr. Donte Newsom, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC

President, West Virginia Nurses Association