

## THEY'RE COMING HOME: Go Meet Them!

A Note from Health Affairs Chair Evelyn Duffy

Here in Cleveland, OH we are celebrating the coming home of LeBron James (He plays pro-basketball in case you aren't sports-minded). In the background is playing the song by Skylar Grey, *I'm Coming Home*, with the line "my kingdom awaits." More important for those of us in Advanced Practice Nursing is the homecoming of our representatives to their kingdoms in which we live and work. While they are on break from Washington, DC, it is a perfect time to connect with them at home. Make an appointment to visit their office, attend a town hall meeting, or help with their campaign. Better yet, invite them to visit you at your practice. Many law makers have no clue what an APRN is really capable of doing, the extent of our role and why we can be trusted with expanded responsibilities.

Here are some resources to help you prepare for your meeting:

The current major concerns of the Nurse Practitioner Roundtable and the APRN workgroup include:

### **1) The Home Health Care Planning and Improvement Act**

H.R. 2504 accessible at <https://beta.congress.gov/113/bills/hr2504/BILLS-113hr2504ih.pdf>

S. 1332 accessible at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-113s1332is/pdf/BILLS-113s1332is.pdf>

Check these sites to see if your representatives have signed on as co-sponsors:

For the House: <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d113:HR02504:@@@P>

For the Senate: <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d113:SN01332:@@@P>

If your representative signed on please thank them. If they have not, explain the impact that APRNs not being able to certify for home health has on the health and wellbeing of our patients.

### **2) The Medicare DME face-to-face Encounter Documentation Requirement**

This would remove the requirement of physician attestation to the fact that we completed the face-to-face. H.R. 3833 accessible at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-113hr3833ih/pdf/BILLS-113hr3833ih.pdf> There is currently no comparable bill in the senate.

Check this site to see if your representatives have signed on as co-sponsors:

<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d113:HR03833:@@@P>

### **3) Support for the acceptance of the Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) Nursing Handbook**

Changes in the handbook would allow Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) full practice authority within the VHA system. This change would be especially helpful in the context of the recent exposure of the service delays within the VHA systems.

Remember that while you may have numerous local concerns, these are federal law makers, their time and attention span is limited. Keep your agenda clear and concise and be prepared to provide your contact information and your stories. For more information or support contact Jill Brett at

[gapna@ajj.com](mailto:gapna@ajj.com) and she will pass your concerns along to the Health Affairs Committee. Enjoy the Homecoming!