

During Congressional Recess, Ask Lawmakers to Support Nursing and Healthcare Priorities

October 8, 2026

Resources to plan your October visit and show local impact of healthcare legislation

As campaigning ramps up before Election Day on Nov. 3, members of Congress have left Washington, D.C., and are working in their home districts. Make the most of the time your lawmakers are home before the lame duck session by meeting with them at your organization or during a community event to discuss the impact that proposed legislation and policies would have on the nursing workforce and ability to provide care.

Congress and the administration continue to consider policies affecting the nursing workforce, workplace safety, affordability, among other healthcare priorities, and that focus is expected to continue when they return to Washington, D.C., for the lame duck session scheduled to begin Nov. 9. Here are some resources that can assist you and your team in conversations with your lawmakers about these priorities before they make end-of-year decisions.

Reach out to [your member of Congress](#)' office to schedule time with your representative while they are in their home district. Consider [inviting them to tour your organization](#), meeting with them in their district office, or connecting at a community event. If an in-person meeting is not possible, call, email or write to share your perspective. As a nurse leader, your voice carries credibility on these priorities. Be ready to tell your story.

ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

[Reauthorize Title VIII Nursing Workforce Programs.](#) Ensure continued support for nursing education and workforce development programs helping build the nursing workforce. While funding for Title VIII programs continues to be appropriated, Congress has not reauthorized them. Share with your lawmakers why reauthorization is important to sustaining the nursing workforce and meeting the healthcare needs of your community.

[Protect Healthcare Workers from Workplace Violence.](#) Urge Congress to advance the Save Healthcare Workers Act to strengthen protections for nurses and healthcare workers facing increasing rates of workplace violence. Violence in healthcare settings threatens workforce safety and can disrupt the delivery of patient care. Share with your lawmakers why federal protections are needed to support the healthcare workforce and the patients they serve.

Mitigate Medicaid Losses. Minimize coverage losses and funding reductions so hospitals and health systems can maintain patient care. If fully implemented, H.R. 1 would reduce access to care, increase wait times for care, increase uncompensated care and displace millions from coverage. Share with your lawmakers the impact that H.R. 1 provider taxes, state-directed payments and other provisions will have on your community.

Extend Vital Healthcare Programs. The continuing resolution passed in September did not include vital healthcare funding programs such as the Low-volume Hospital Payment Adjustment and the Medicare-dependent Hospital Program, which both expire on Dec. 31, 2026. These designations protect small, rural hospitals' financial viability and ensure they can continue providing patients access to care. They will need to be extended during the lame duck session. Ask your lawmakers to support extension of these and [other expiring healthcare programs](#).

Encourage Collaborative Healthcare Affordability Solutions. As the backbone of the U.S. healthcare system, hospitals and health systems understand the importance of making sure high-quality care is affordable and accessible. AHA has released its own affordability report that contains actionable and achievable strategies and solutions that hospitals and health systems can look at, as well as sharing ideas for engagement by the broader healthcare system focused on improving the health of individuals and communities. Urge policymakers to pursue solutions that involve not only hospitals but also purchasers, technology companies, drug and supply manufacturers, and individuals to collaborate on these efforts.

Protect the 340B Drug Pricing Program. Hospitals depend on the 340B program to manage rising prescription drug costs and expand access to care for patients. Ask your members of Congress to oppose any harmful changes to the 340B program.

AONL AND AHA RESOURCES

Your voice is extremely important, and your legislators listen to you.

Prepare for a successful encounter with this [toolkit of tips and best practices](#) for [meeting with lawmakers and hosting them at your hospital](#). The [AONL Action Center](#) has more information and resources to assist you in your advocacy.

The AHA's [We Care, We Vote](#) webpage contains resources for hospitals and health system leaders to prepare for the 2026 midterm election. Learn about the top issues and what to say to candidates, plus use the virtual map for election and voting information for each state.

FURTHER QUESTIONS

If you have further questions, please contact AONL at aonladvocacy@aha.org.