



ANA-PAC 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name:

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1. The American Nurses Association holds a fundamental belief that health care is a basic human right and supports restructuring health care in order to provide access to affordable essential health care services to all residents of the United States, regardless of pre-existing conditions. ANA further believes that health care services should be reorganized to concentrate on community-based primary care and preventive care while also focusing on better control of rising health care costs. How do you plan to address the issue of providing adequate health care coverage for the uninsured and underinsured?

Thanks to government interference in the health care market, many Americans, including the unemployed and those who work for small business, cannot afford health insurance. This causes the uninsured to seek basic medical care at already overcrowded emergency rooms, further driving up health care costs and causing premiums to rise for those with insurance. Therefore, I will put individuals back in control of the health care market through generous tax cuts, tax credits, and expanded access to Health Savings Accounts (HSAs). My tax credits will be refundable against income and payroll tax liability so they can benefit those working Americans who pay more in payroll than in income taxes.

- a) Describe what benefits and services you believe should be included in basic health care coverage.

The federal government has neither the constitutional authority nor the competence to design a health care package that can meet the unique needs of all Americans. By restoring control over health care to individuals, I will empower Americans to seek out the type of health insurance that meets their needs.

- b) Describe the mechanism you believe would best finance such coverage.

I believe the mechanism would be generous tax cuts and credits, putting control of the health care dollar back into the hands of the individual.



c) What is your position on coverage of mental health services?

I favor such coverage and believe that if we restore a free-market in health care, those who desire such coverage will be able to obtain it. However, I do not favor mandating health plans offering mental health coverage because these types of mandates only raise the price of health insurance, thus causing some Americans to lose their coverage.

2. What policy initiatives would you propose to ensure that Americans receive safe, cost-effective, comprehensive, quality comprehensive health care services?

Please see above answers.

a) What is your position on legislation or regulations that would require health care facilities to develop and implement systems that ensure appropriate and safe registered nurse staffing levels?

Under the 10th Amendment to the Constitution, the authority to regulate the working conditions of nurses is left to the states.

3. How would you seek to address the severe nursing shortage facing this country?

Please see answer to 3b.

a) What is your position on measures that address working conditions for registered nurses and the safety of their patients, such as legislation prohibiting the use of mandatory overtime as a staffing tool, and “whistleblower protections” that would support nurses’ right to speak without reprisal about activities, practices, or conditions that threaten the health and safety of their patients or the environment?

Again, the Constitution leaves this issue to the states.

b) What measures would you support to encourage more people to enter and stay in the field of nursing? What level of federal funding would you provide for Title VIII programs and the Nurse Reinvestment Act to ensure sufficient numbers of qualified nurses are available to provide a full range of nursing services in all geographic areas?

I would consider providing tax credits to those who enter and remain in the nursing profession. While my main goal is to reduce the role of the federal government in health care, I would use some of the savings from reductions in our overseas commitments and corporate welfare to fund the Nurse Reinvestment Act until we can transition to a system where funding for those programs can be handled by state and local governments and private initiatives.



4. Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) play a crucial role in providing health care services in our nation's most underserved areas. These nurses typically hold degrees at the highest levels of education and receive advanced training in specialty areas of practice (i.e. Nurse Practitioners, Certified Nurse Midwives, and Clinical Nurse Specialists, among others). Despite the resolution of many practice and reimbursement issues, APRNs still experience discrimination and barriers to practice in our health care system. What is your position on the full utilization of APRNs?
- a) Given that APRNs typically serve underserved communities, what is your position regarding APRNs as primary care providers in community settings?

I support full utilization of APRNs, but the states should take the lead on full utilization.

5. On-the-job injuries caused by the strain of lifting and repositioning patients cause 12% of nurses to leave the profession annually. The average nurse working an 8 hour shift is currently required to lift 1.8 tons. If elected, how would you require health care facilities to invest in safe patient lifting technology to reduce the risk of workplace injuries to nurses?

This is another issue that, under the 10th Amendment, must be left to the states.

6. The Centers for Disease Control has confirmed the presence of hundreds of potentially harmful chemicals in the blood, urine, and breast milk of the U.S. population. Even more, toxic chemicals have also been detected in umbilical cord blood, indicating the ability of these chemicals to cross the placenta and reach the fetus. The incidence of diseases thought to have an environmental component are on the rise: Asthma prevalence has doubled in ten years; autism has increased more than tenfold; 1 in 6 children are born with a developmental disability; and a woman's lifetime risk of breast cancer is now 1 in 7. What is your plan to create a healthy environment in order to reduce the rates of environmental causes of illness?

The key to sound environmental policy is respect for private property rights. The strict enforcement of property rights corrects environmental wrongs while increasing the cost of polluting.

In a free market, no one is allowed to pollute his neighbor's land, air, or water. If your property is being damaged, you have every right to sue the polluter, and government should protect that right. After paying damages, the polluter's production and sale costs rise, making it unprofitable to continue doing business the same way. Currently, preemptive regulations and pay-to-pollute schemes favor those wealthy enough to perform the regulatory tap dance, while those who own the polluted land rarely receive a quick or just resolution to their problems.

Individuals, businesses, localities, and states must be free to negotiate environmental standards. Those who depend on the land for their health and livelihood have the greatest incentive to be responsible stewards.



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