

# Are You Politically Fit?

We all know that physical fitness, activity, and exercise can improve our patients' and our own health and reduce the risk of developing several diseases. Most importantly, it can improve our quality of life.

What does physical fitness have to do with government affairs? Well, political fitness is similar to physical fitness... the more you do it, the more impact you will have on both short term and long-term benefits. No one becomes a marathon runner overnight, so I've broken down some political exercise for you to build up your endurance!



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## **Level 1: Beginner Exercises: These are easy tasks that take less than 15 minutes to do online.**

- Make sure your voter registration is up to date! Our Secretary of State's website voter registration website is an excellent way to verify your voter registration status. You can find the link to this website on the TNA's Government Affairs Advocacy Toolbox Page (<https://www.tnaonline.org/advocacy-toolbox/>) It will also tell you your polling location for election day! If you are not registered to vote, or your registration is not up to date, you can also find links to register or fix your information.
- Find out and make note of who your legislators are! TNA's Government Affairs Advocacy Toolbox Page (<https://www.tnaonline.org/advocacy-toolbox/>) will link you to ANA's #NursesVote Action Center. The Action Center will tell you exactly who your Federal, State, and Local elected officials are and even give you their contact

information for their office, email, and social media. Follow or friend them on social media.

- Speaking of social media, make sure you have liked or followed TNA on Facebook, and Twitter!
- Make sure you are on our TNA email list so that you are informed about issues going on at the State and National level that effects your profession, healthcare, and your patients. Just visit [www.TNAonline.org](http://www.TNAonline.org) to sign up!

## **Level 2: Intermediate Exercises: You are making progress and increasing your impact with these activities!**

- Involve a friend! We all know accountability helps us meet our exercise goals! Make it your goal to get at least one friend or co-worker complete the beginner impact exercises each month. Think about the fun you can have by gathering these friends to go vote together or send emails to elected officials together! Make it a social event, and you are more likely to complete your goal!
- This exercise is working on your endurance and preparing you for a productive relationship with your elected official. Did you see an interesting article in the paper or through TNA or ANA about the nursing profession or health care? Send it to your elected officials. Tell them why you find it interesting or informative and start building a relationship with them. We want them to see you as a helpful and reliable resource for information!
- This exercise is like doing sprints because it requires you to act quickly! Since you completed the level 1 exercises, we know you are on the TNA email list and are receiving our legislative action alerts during legislative session. When you get an alert, make sure to quickly call, write, email, or visit a legislator to make your voice heard on important votes that will affect you! Make sure

your growing list of registered voters from level 1 is responding to the alerts too.

## **Level 3: Advanced Exercises: These activities take it to the next level and show your long-term commitment to TNA and being politically fit!**

- Attend the TNA's Day on the Hill. This event brings together nurses from across the state for a training on the important legislative issues and how to advocate best on them. Then we go visit with elected officials to make our voices heard. This event is held when the Legislature is in session during February or March typically. Visiting a legislator in person is one of the most effective political activities you can do! Bonus points if you get your friends from level 1 to attend too!
- Join the GOVA Committee. This committee, made up of TNA members, is responsible for studying legislation and making recommendations for TNA's action. All you need to do is fill out a committee interest form or contact me to find out more information.
- Donate to the Tennessee Nurse Political Action Committee. You can think of the Tennessee Nurse PAC as a joint checking or savings account where your contribution is made more powerful by being joined by others. It is a voluntary, non-partisan way that we can support candidates and elected officials that support our mission to promote and protect the registered nurse, to advance the practice of nursing and to assure a healthier Tennessee.

So, whether you are have already completed level 1 or on level 3, the important thing is that you continue to practice all these political exercises on a regular basis and get others to join you! You will start to see immediate and long-term results!