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# A Century Of Legislative Accomplishments Of North Carolina Nurses

By: **Phoebe Pollitt, RN, PhD**

## **Abstract**

A timeline of some major North Carolina legislative accomplishments by NC nurses during the twentieth century.

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# A Century of Legislative Accomplishments of North Carolina Nurses

By NCNA Member Phoebe Pollitt, RN, PhD, Nursing History Council Vice Chair

When the first meeting of the North Carolina Nurses Association was called to order in 1902, the most important item on the group's agenda was creating legislation to set standards for nursing education, practice, and registration.

*As we make our way through the 2015-2016 legislative session, we can be inspired by the efforts and successes of our nursing predecessors.*

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For over 100 years, through legislative advocacy, NC nurses have advanced both professional interests and the health of citizens of our state.

North Carolina nurses have been invaluable in passing pioneering nursing legislation, including nursing registration, legalization of advanced practice roles, and being the first state to have an all-elected Board of Nursing.

With determination, NC nurses have accomplished much.

As we make our way through the 2015-2016 legislative session, we can be inspired by the efforts and successes of our nursing predecessors as they addressed nursing issues and advocated for the health and well-being of all people.

Here is a brief look back of some of the major legislative accomplishments achieved by NCNA and the nurses of North Carolina.

## TIMELINE OF SOME MAJOR NC LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mar 3

- 1903 ••• NC becomes the first state to enact legislation to recognize Registered Nurses.
- 1917 ••• State funds are designated for the first nursing school "inspectress," appointed by the North Carolina Nurses Association, to visit and report back to the legislature about the conditions of nursing education in NC.
- 1925 ••• Minimum standards in nursing education are passed by the legislature and are required for schools of nursing to be accredited.
- 1947 ••• Licensed Practical Nurses are included in the Nurse Practice Act.
- 1953 ••• The practice of nursing is defined for the first time.
- 1963 ••• For the first time, state monies are appropriated for educating nurses in advanced practice (Nurse Anesthetists).
- 1965 ••• Licensure becomes mandatory to practice nursing in NC.
- 1973 ••• Nurse Practitioners are authorized to practice in NC.
- 1981 ••• A new Nurse Practice Act is passed requiring the Board of Nursing to be composed of nurses elected by nurses in NC.
- 1983 ••• Certified Nurse Midwives are authorized to practice in NC.
- 1997 ••• NC joins other Nurse Licensure Compact states allowing nurses reciprocity to practice in Compact states without having to retake the NCLEX.
- 2005 ••• Demonstration of Continuing Competency is mandated for nursing license renewal.