

Written Testimony

- Written testimony is an opportunity to articulate your perspective on a current legislative issue/bill before a legislative committee when you cannot be physically present at the committee meeting. It is the opportunity for you, a current nursing student & future nurse, to **educate** a committee of non-health professionals about your perspective on a bill and **provide evidence** to support your perspective.
- The current public health crisis has led to primarily written testimony options for the current Massachusetts legislative session making this a very current opportunity and valuable skill – [191st General Court – Hearings and Events](#)
- Each student nurse will prepare written testimony as if it were being submitted to a legislative health policy commission or governmental health commission
 - Ex: Massachusetts
 - [Joint Committee on Health Care Financing](#)
 - [Joint Committee on Public Health](#)
 - [Massachusetts Joint Committees - an Overview](#)
 - Ex. National
 - [Key Committees on Healthcare in the US](#)
- Written testimony should:
 - introduce the topic
 - express a specific position on bill (support or opposition)
 - present a persuasive argument for a perspective on that topic (support or opposition)
 - present evidence to support your perspective (support or opposition)
 - defend the topic and your perspective on that topic
 - acknowledge both sides of the topic while making a convincing argument for your side
 - See rubric on CANVAS
- Testimony will include: (see *how to details* on page 2)
 - Opening statement with an introduction & Statement of position
 - Background or brief history of the issue
 - How the issue effects nurses & the issues of nursing
 - Final recommendation for or against the issue
 - Alternate recommendations as needed
 - Closing information as required by [General Rule 1.A.2](#)
 - Name of person testifying
 - Organizational affiliation of person testifying
 - Email address & Physical address
 - Telephone number
 - Reference list with in text citations
 - Length - Testimony should be 2-3 pages.
 - Use scholarly writing technique (grammar, word choice etc) but avoid jargon
 - Times new roman, 12 pt font, double spaced, 1” margins
 - See rubric on CANVAS

The How To Details: (amended from AACOM, 2018)

- Opening Statements =
 - Thank the chairperson and the members of the committee
 - Give your name and brief credentials
 - Identify the group you represent or affiliation, when applicable
 - Briefly introduce the subject of your testimony:
 - Tell your audience what the issue/problem is and what you want them to do about it.
 - Use the bill number and name in the intro
 - All subsequent references may use just the bill #
 - CLEARLY state your position on bill (support or opposition) or the item under review by the committee
 - Opening statements show that you are present by choice, you consider yourself an appropriate spokesperson for the occasion, and you desire to help the committee.
 - Body=
 - What is the problem or legislative issue: is it a cost/access/quality problem
 - Offer background & details about the problem/issue and its impact nursing and nursing care
 - An anecdotal story is a good “hook” (must be relevant & not violate HIPAA)
 - Present data to substantiate the problem’s impact on cost, access, quality, nursing, healthcare, populations or patients but don’t overwhelm the audience with statistics.
 - Present evidence from the literature (higher level the better, but explain in layman’s terms; keep jargon to a minimum)
 - What you want your audience to do about the problem
 - State your recommendation (solution) and describe the implications of the solution/legislation to nursing, healthcare &/or constituent groups
 - Describe the benefits the solution/legislation will produce
 - Include stakeholders who share your recommendation and why (the facts that back up your position)
 - Know the opposition’s arguments and be able to counter them
 - Conclusion=
 - Repeat your Recommendation
 - Summarize the most important reasons/facts that substantiate your position
 - At the risk of sounding repetitive – be repetitive!
 - Use language in your writing that convincingly expresses your position
 - Thank the chairman and committee
- (Amended from [AACOM, 2018](#))
- Closing information as required by [General Rule 1.A.2](#)
 - Name of person testifying
 - Organizational affiliation of person testifying
 - Email address Physical address Telephone number
 - Reference list to support in text citations

- See resources on debating, argumentative essays and presenting evidence on CANVAS and as follows:
 - [American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine](#)
 - [Center for Citizen Advocacy](#)
 - [APA Why you must stand up](#) (1:27)
 - APA advocacy (2014) – [Influencing the process](#) (p.15-17)
 - Full link: [APA A Psychologist's Guide to Federal Advocacy](#)
 - [Buerhaus \(2012\) Message for thought leaders & health policymakers.pdf](#)
- Examples:
 - [Testimony of Dr. Ernest Grant, PhD, RN, FAAN President American Nurses Association regarding “Part 2: Protecting the Reliability of the U.S. Medical Supply Chain During the COVID-19 Pandemic” before U.S. Senate Committee on Finance](#)
 - [Testimony of Dr. Joseph W. Thompson, MD, MPH Director, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center to Prevent Childhood Obesity](#)
 - [Testimony of the Massachusetts Psychological Association in Support of H.913 and S.610, An Act to Increase Consumer Transparency about Insurance Provider Networks 2019](#)
 - [Testimony of the Massachusetts Psychological Association in support of S. 555 and H. 907, An Act Relative to the Continuity of Care of Mental Health Treatment 2017](#)
 - [Testimony of the Nursing Community Coalition](#)