



# Press Release

## **For Immediate Release**

**May 15, 2023**

Contact: Lisa Maxwell

Texas Nurses Association

[lmaxwell@texasnurses.org](mailto:lmaxwell@texasnurses.org)

512.452.0648 x 130

## **Texas Nurses Applaud Passage of Nurse Friendly Bills**

*Two bills aim to protect nurses in the workplace and the third benefits students and school nurses.*

Austin, TX — The Texas Nurses Association is pleased to share that the Texas Legislature recently passed three bills that are responsive to nursing issues: SB 294 (which permits a school nurse to administer asthma medication to students in respiratory distress), SB 840 (which increases the penalty for assaulting health care workers from a misdemeanor to a felony), and SB 1004 (which increases the penalty for removing an electronic monitoring device if the individual was ordered to wear one as part of community supervision, parole, mandatory supervision, or release on bail).

SB 294 is responsive to problems school nurses saw in practice under existing regulations. School nurses were limited in their ability to provide albuterol, levalbuterol, and potentially other breathing medications. As a result of delays in access to breathing medication, there have been instances of school children dying from treatable respiratory attacks. This bill expands access to the medication as well as personnel authorized to administer the medication. "These breathing medications are safe and effective," said Serena Bumpus, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, CEO of TNA. "We are pleased to see increased access which will support student health and well-being."

SB 840 is named the Jacqueline "Jackie" Pokuaa and Katie "Annette" Flowers Act in memory of the nurse and social worker shot and killed by a violent criminal in Methodist Dallas Medical Center. The bill increases the penalty for assaulting hospital personnel, which includes nurses, physicians, physician assistants, maintenance or janitorial staff, receptionists, and other individuals who are employed by or work in a hospital, from a misdemeanor to a felony. "This is a long-awaited change from earlier legislation that applied this protection only to nurses working in the emergency department. Now, all nurses and healthcare workers have the support to hold those who assault them fully accountable under the law," said Bumpus.

SB 1004, which is also responsive to the shootings at Methodist Dallas Medical Center, makes it a felony to remove an electronic monitoring device if the person was ordered to wear the device as a condition of community supervision, parole, mandatory supervision, or release on bail. The man who shot

Jacqueline “Jackie” Pokuaa and Katie “Annette” Flowers cut off his ankle monitor before going to Methodist Dallas Medical Center.

“We appreciate the leadership of Senators Johnson, West, and Huffman who authored the bills, as well as their many coauthors and sponsors and cosponsors in the House,” said Jack Frazee, JD, TNA’s Director of Government Affairs. “These bills represent the collective advocacy of nurses throughout the state who worked closely with lawmakers to advance these issues. To all who supported their passage, we appreciate your advocacy.”

###

#### **About Texas Nurses Association**

The Texas Nurses Association (TNA) is a statewide membership-based professional association of registered nurses. Our vision is to empower Texas Nurses to advance the profession. Founded in 1907, TNA is the oldest and largest nursing association in Texas.

Contact us at [tna@texasnurses.org](mailto:tna@texasnurses.org). Follow TNA on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for updates.