

**RESOLUTION**  
**National Federation Assembly**  
May 16 -17, 2011

**RESOLUTION: # 003**

**SUBJECT: IMPLICATIONS OF FATIGUE ON PATIENT & NURSE SAFETY**

**WHEREAS,** The use of extended work shifts, overtime and missed breaks has escalated as hospitals cope with a shortage of registered nurses (RNs) and

**WHEREAS,** The Institute of Medicine and other recent empirical research has demonstrated that risks of nurses making a patient error are significantly increased when work shifts are longer than twelve hours, when nurses work overtime, when they work without rest breaks or when they work more than forty hours per week, and

**WHEREAS,** The well-documented hazards associated with sleep-deprived resident physicians have influenced changes in house staff rotation policies, and

**WHEREAS,** No state or federal regulations restrict the number of hours a nurse may voluntarily work in twenty-four hours or in a seven-day period even though they do so for air traffic controllers, train engineers, truck drivers, airline pilots and flight attendants, and

**WHEREAS,** The ANA *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* clearly articulates the obligation of registered nurses to act in manner that is consistent with maintaining patient and personal safety,

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED,**

That NFN develop communications and other strategies to increase awareness of RNs, managers, employers, policy makers and the public of the dangerous impact of fatigue on patient, nurse and public safety, and be it further

**RESOLVED,**

That NFN support state efforts to advocate for legislative and regulatory remedies to ensure that nurses and the public are protected from the adverse effects of fatigue