



May 28, 2019

The Honorable Derek Merrin
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High St., 13th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: HB 224- Regards practice of certified registered nurse anesthetists

Dear Chairman Merrin, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Boyd, & Members of the House Health Committee:

As the president of the Ohio Nurses Association (ONA), I am writing on behalf of our association in support of House Bill 224 (HB 224), a permissive bill that aims to increase access to health care for many Ohio citizens, while also clarifying the Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist's (CRNA) scope of practice.

HB 224 corrects an issue that arose in 2013 when a long-accepted practice allowing CRNAs to order certain medications to be administered by nurses in the post anesthesia care unit (PACU) was called into question. Although no patient safety concerns were identified in making the administrative ruling, it was determined that because CRNAs do not have prescriptive authority, unlike all other advanced practice registered nurses in Ohio, they could not continue to order limited medications even in limited circumstances. Notably, although CRNAs cannot order others to administer medications, they can administer these same medications themselves without a physician's order, so patient safety was not the driving factor behind the decision. HB 224 judiciously addresses the practice of CRNAs and corrects the patient care problems that arose when the 2013 opinion was issued.

Further, the language in HB 224 is permissive and allows each facility to determine how to best utilize CRNAs based on the anesthesia delivery model adopted by that particular facility. Such flexibility is important in a state like Ohio where care needs and resources vary significantly.

As an association of nearly 10,000 nurses, ONA strives to improve the health and wellbeing of all Ohio's citizens. We believe that HB 224 seeks to improve access to health care, allows facilities to utilize CRNAs in a way that is best for their community, while clarifying the laws and rules that govern a CRNA's scope of practice. We respectfully request support for HB 224 from members of Ohio's House Health Committee.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BJB', is written over a horizontal line.

Brian J. Burger MSN, APRN, AGACNP-BC, CCRN
President Ohio Nurses Association