



**OHIO ORGANIZATION  
FOR NURSING LEADERSHIP**  
OHIO HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

**Senate Bill 86  
Proponent Testimony  
Ohio Senate Health Committee  
April 19, 2023**

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Health Committee, on behalf of the Ohio Organization for Nursing Leadership (OONL), we appreciate the opportunity to share our support for Senate Bill 86 which would regulate surgical smoke.

The Ohio Organization for Nursing Leadership is a state organization of nurse leaders serving as the catalyst for innovative health care in Ohio and the nation. Members of our organization (currently numbering more than 1,800) represent nursing leadership from hospitals and health care systems across the state.

Nurses have a profound knowledge of health care needs, and the factors that impact patient health. We can make unique and sustaining contributions to how health policy is shaped, and we are pleased to offer our perspective on the dangers of surgical smoke.

As you may have heard from other proponents, the Center for Disease Control's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) confirms that surgical smoke has been shown to contain toxic gases, vapors and particulates, viable and non-viable cellular material, viruses and bacteria. Exposure to these contaminants has been proven to include eye, nose, and throat irritation, headache, cough, nasal congestion, asthma and asthma-like symptoms.

The Association of PeriOperative Registered Nurses states that the average daily impact of surgical smoke to the surgical team is equivalent to inhaling the smoke of 27-30 unfiltered cigarettes and that perioperative nurses report twice as many respiratory issues as compared to the general population.

NIOSH references a 2010 survey in which respondents stated that surgical smoke evacuation methods were used in only 47% of laser surgery cases and only 14% of electrosurgery cases. NIOSH issued the following statement "Health care employers and employees share responsibility to ensure adherence to exposure controls and best practices."

The Joint Commission, which works to improve health care to the public issued a Quick Safety advisory in 2020 titled "Alleviating the Dangers of Surgical Smoke". Further, the Joint Commission's accreditation manual does include an element (EC 02.02.01 EP 9) that requires

organizations to minimize risks associated with selecting, handling, storing, transporting, using and disposing of hazardous gases and vapors.

Other governmental and professional organizations that have provided recommendations or standards related to surgical smoke include Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), American National Standards Institute (ANSI), Emergency Care Research Institute (ECRI), and AORN.

As nurse leaders, the health and safety of our employees is paramount and OONL appreciates Senator Brenner for recognizing the dangers of surgical smoke and the risks taken by our surgical team members and are grateful to him for reintroducing this important legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

#### References

[https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/health\\_carehospitals/smoke.html](https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/health_carehospitals/smoke.html)

<https://aorn.org/government-affairs/policy-agenda/surgical-smoke-free-or>

<https://www.jointcommission.org/resources/newsandmultimedia/newsletters/newsletters/quick%20safety/quick-safety-issue-56/quick-safety-issue-56/>