

**Ohio House Health Committee
HB 196 Proponent Testimony
Maria Bain, CSFA, Cincinnati, OH
March 1, 2022**

Chair Lipps, Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the Ohio House Health Committee, my name is Maria Bain, and I am a Certified Surgical First Assist (CSFA) in Cincinnati, Ohio. I have worked in the operating room for over 30 years. I was certified as a surgical technologist (CST) 31 years ago, and for the past 22 years, I have worked as a CSFA and have held memberships in both the National Surgical Assistant Association (NSAA) and the Association for Surgical Assistants (ASA).

I support House Bill 196 for the licensure of surgical assistants because as a mid-level healthcare provider, I believe we need to ensure that all people working as surgical assistants are adequately educated and certified statewide. The only way to make sure of this is to have a state-issued license to legally mandate these qualifications. When I learned about this bill, I was discussing it with several surgeons I work with and they were all shocked to find out that we are not already licensed in this profession. One surgeon said he assumed we were licensed since we do the same duties as a surgical PA (physician assistant) or NP (nurse practitioner) in the OR.

Our job is to assist the surgeon throughout the surgery, meaning we drape the patient, make incisions, dissect and manipulate tissue, retract tissue to expose the surgical site, assist with hemostasis and suction, identify and protect important anatomical structures, suture wounds, place drains, and apply wound dressings, among other things. We work alongside the surgeon, much like a resident, and are expected to know a wide variety of procedures and how to appropriately assist in all of them. This is a job that is very “hands-on” and it is important to always ensure the safety of the patient. I believe this starts by making sure any person working in the role of a surgical assistant is properly trained, educated and certified; which would be made certain if a state license was approved.

Finally, I believe a state license would make surgical assistants more accountable for their actions. Right now, if a surgical assistant did something that resulted in causing harm to a patient, he could be fired from his hospital, but there is no way to track his offenses and make sure he remedies the issue in some way before being employed at another hospital in the state. If that assistant had a license that could potentially be revoked by the state, he may take more caution in how he cares for a patient.

Thank you for allowing me to express the reasons that I support HB 196.

Maria Bain, CSFA