

# WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: December 10, 2019 \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Carie M. Twichell \_\_\_\_\_

Are you representing: Yourself \_\_\_\_\_ Organization

Organization (If Applicable): Ohio Academy of Anesthesiologist Assistants \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Title: Past President \_\_\_\_\_

Address: 7111 Valley View \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes  No \_\_\_\_\_

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): Sub. H.B. 224 \_\_\_\_\_

Specific Issue: scope of practice \_\_\_\_\_

Are you testifying as a: Proponent \_\_\_\_\_ Opponent \_\_\_\_\_ Interested Party

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes  No \_\_\_\_\_

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? 3-5 minutes \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

Seeking inclusion of Anesthesiologists Assistants in anesthesia care bill.

*Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.*

**INTERESTED PARTY TESTIMONY ON SUB. H. B. 224  
HOUSE HEALTH COMMITTEE  
DECEMBER 10, 2019**

**Mr. Chairman and members of the House Health Committee**, my name is Carie Twichell and I am a Certified Anesthesiologist Assistant authorized to practice in Ohio and have been since 1999. I am here to testify as an interested party on Sub. H.B. 224, regarding the practice of certified registered nurse anesthetists in Ohio. I have a Master of Science Degree in Anesthesia Program from Case Western University School of Medicine and I am currently employed by MetroHealth Medical Center in Cleveland where CAAs and CRNAs work together side-by-side collaboratively and interchangeably.

**Background on AAs**

- Certified anesthesiologist assistants (AAs) are highly trained master's degree level non-physician anesthesia care providers. The AA profession was established in the late 1960s by physician anesthesiologists in Cleveland, Ohio.
- After studying the educational pathway for physician anesthesiologists and nurse anesthetists, physician anesthesiologists created a new educational paradigm for a mid-level anesthesia practitioner emphasizing a science/pre-medical – rather than nursing – background in college.
- This person would perform the same job as nurse anesthetists but could seek admittance to medical school if appropriate. The founders recognized early the advantage of a strong pre-medical background in comparison to the nursing education background of the nurse anesthetist profession.

**Federal Government**

- The federal government, specifically the Medicare Program, and numerous states recognize certified anesthesiologist assistants and nurse anesthetists as being qualified anesthesia providers who have identical clinical capabilities and responsibilities while working in the Anesthesia Care Team model.

- For decades, the Anesthesia Care Team has safely and effectively delivered anesthesia care with either a certified anesthesiologist assistant or nurse anesthetist as the non-physician anesthetist member of the team.

### **Anesthesiologist's Perspective**

It is the position of American Society of Anesthesiologists that both certified anesthesiologist assistants and nurse anesthetists have identical patient care responsibilities and technical capabilities – a view in harmony with their equivalent treatment under the Medicare Program.

### **Differences in Pathway**

- Certain differences do exist, however, between certified anesthesiologist assistants and nurse anesthetists with regard to educational program prerequisites, instruction, and requirements for supervised clinical practice.
- A certified anesthesiologist assistant program requires a bachelor's degree emphasizing pre-medical, science-based coursework and medical school based Master of Health Science Degree in Anesthesia. Additionally, certified anesthesiologist assistants must practice under the supervision of a physician anesthesiologist which is the optimal model of care.
- Nurse anesthetist programs require a nursing degree and one year of critical care experience.

### **Sub. H.B. 224 (version 10) Challenges for AA's**

- Despite being recognized as equivalent anesthesia providers by CMS and in Ohio and the requirement of optimal supervision by an Anesthesiologist, the Sub. H.B. 224, grants a broader scope of authority for CRNA's than CAAs.
- The disparity will result in a three-tier delivery model for anesthesia care.

- AAs will have difficulty retaining and obtaining clinical opportunities despite their continuous and active practice and education in Ohio for over 40 years. This will negatively impact access to patient care in Ohio.

**Proposal:**

- *Sub. H.B. 224 should be amended to include AAs authorizing an equivalent scope of practice as CRNA's with the additional requirement that AAs must be supervised by Anesthesiologists as currently required.*

I would be happy to address your questions.