



Testimony in Support of SB 136 A

May 15, 2013

House Committee on Health Care

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Oregon Nurses Association

Chair Greelick and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Nurses Association supports SB 136 A, which would grant Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) who meet the requirements of the Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN) the ability to apply for limited prescriptive authority.

As advanced practice nurses, CRNAs provide vital services to the patients and communities they serve, and are a critical component of our health care workforce.

Currently, CRNAs don't have the ability to write prescriptions. Oregon CRNAs administer medications under Drug Enforcement Administration regulations that permit CRNAs to "select, order, administer" controlled substances acting as an agent of a provider who is a DEA registrant. The current arrangement doesn't allow CRNAs to prescribe medications that might be needed by patients to either prepare for or recover from a procedure requiring anesthesia. CRNAs who are granted prescriptive authority under SB 136 A, would have their own DEA registration.

Oregon's Nurse Practitioners and Clinical Nurse Specialists have had prescriptive authority since 1979 and 2005, respectively. Through legislative authority and OSBN rulemaking, prescriptive authority includes specific education in pharmacology, pharmacotherapeutics, and other requirements. Having this authority helps providers meet the needs of their patients.

Further extending the ability to apply for prescriptive authority to CRNAs is consistent with recommendations made by the Institute of Medicine in their Report on the *Future of Nursing*. This report is one of several that calls on policy makers to lift barriers that prevent nurses—especially advanced practice nurses like CRNAs—from practicing to the full extent of their training and education.

In an era of health care reform when more people will have access to care, ONA supports policies that enable health professionals to best meet the needs of populations across all practice settings, when consistent with the training and education of each group of licensed providers.

ONA urges you to support SB 136 A.