



# Oregon

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## Board of Nursing

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February 25, 2015

Before the  
House Committee on Health Care

**HB 2295**

The Oregon State Board of Nursing wishes to submit informational testimony regarding House Bill 2295. The purpose of the bill is to introduce the role of the anesthesiologist assistant.

Prior to the introduction of a new provider type in anesthesia services for the public, we believe it is prudent to inform the committee of the existing practice of more than 620 Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) in Oregon.

CRNAs demonstrate the highest level of educational standards for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs); practitioners are required to have an average of three-and-a-half years of critical care nursing experience prior to obtaining a master's or doctoral degree in nursing anesthesia, followed by completion of their national certification examination.

CRNAs are trained to provide all types of anesthesia services (local, regional, and general) to patients across the lifespan in a variety of health care settings. Often, CRNAs are the primary and independent provider of anesthesia for our military, veterans, women in childbirth and for those living in rural settings. CRNAs are also expert consultants who collaborate with physicians, dentists, and other APRNs to provide patients with safe and effective anesthesia care plans during medical and dental procedures.

In Oregon, CRNAs are licensed as independent practitioners, however employers often place limits on the range of services they may provide. There are numerous studies that confirm CRNAs are as safe as their anesthesiologist colleagues and advocate for expansion of CRNA services. An analysis of Medicare data from 1999-2005, found no evidence to support oversight of CRNA practice by physicians, and recommended that every state allow for full independent practice for CRNAs (Dulisse & Cromwell, 2010).

In 2013, the Oregon Legislature expanded CRNA practice from selecting, ordering, and administering medications to include prescriptive authority. This change allows CRNAs to prescribe medications.

The Board would be glad to answer any questions the Committee may have. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding House Bill 2295.