

March 2, 2019

Oregon House
Committee on Health Care
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Oregon Senate Bill 136: Removes 10-day supply limitation of prescriptions issued by certified registered nurse anesthetists.

Dear Senator Monnes Anderson and Members of the Committee:

As a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA), I am writing to support SB 136 and to remove the 10-day supply limitation of prescriptions issued by Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs). This limitation is unnecessary and detrimental to patient care. CRNAs provide much of the anesthesia care in Oregon, and more than 80% of the anesthesia services in rural areas. Our patient's benefit from statutes that allow us to function in our fullest extent of education and training. The opioid use disorder is well documented nationwide and the effects can be specifically seen with the lack of access to adequate healthcare — a problem rural Oregonians face. Removal of the 10-day prescribing privileges without refill would allow CRNAs in Oregon to provide Medication Assisted Treatments (MATs) with the 2018 passing of the House of Representatives Bill (HR) 6 - "SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act". HR 6 was sponsored by Representative Greg Walden to allow Oregonians in rural Oregon to have access to MATs. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) website and the Buprenorphine Treatment Practitioner Locator, there are many counties in eastern Oregon without access to a provider of MATs. In Harney County there are no providers, only one in Malheur County, and one in Grant County (a Nurse Practitioner). In Yamhill County, there are only nine providers for a population of roughly 100,000. Access to providers offering MATs is extremely difficult for patients in rural Oregon, and CRNAs can help provide this services to Oregon residents, but only if we obtain adequate prescription privileges.

CRNAs have the opportunity to continue their post-graduate education and complete a fellowship to become Nonsurgical Pain Management Certified (NSPM-C). There are no board certified, fellowship trained physicians in all of eastern Oregon or on the Oregon coast. This shortage is relieved with CRNAs who have their NSPM-C, but their ability to wean patients off of opioids with interventional pain management and transition to non-opioid medications is hindered with their ability to only prescribe a 10-day prescription with no refill. CRNAs who are NSPM-C cannot function to their full capacity of their education and training with the 10-day limitation. There are Oregonians who live in the rural setting, referred to have their pain managed by a CRNA that is NSPM-C through the Veterans Administration that are denied care because the CRNA cannot prescribe medications beyond 10 days. This is a profound burden to Veterans throughout the state who choose to live in the rural setting.

Please support SB 136 and allow CRNAs to become part of the solution to help Oregonians who suffer from opioid use disorder. Allow NSPM-C CRNAs to treat patients to the fullest extent of their training all across Oregon, and especially in the rural areas.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical issue.

Respectfully,

Alana Perley CRNA

Alana Perley, MN, CRNA
Portland, Oregon