

Submitter: Monica Martinez
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure: HB4106

Oregon Senate Committee on Health Care,
Although it appears from the recorded session of that some of the committee members have already made up their decision that apprenticeships would be ideal for the Certified Surgical Technologist for the shortage in this profession. I urge you to reconsider. I do not have lobbyist money, all I have to offer is my underrepresented, marginalized voice to speak of my concerns and why I would urge you to reconsider and OPPOSE HB4106A.

Mr. Riggs presentations was worrisome to me. He seemed concerned that there are testimonies from CSTs in New York, Texas, and Idaho advocating against it. It should also concern Oregonians that an agency such as Northwest Grassroots & Communications, who operates from Washington, DC and state-based services from Texas, is advocating for this change. This measure has been proposed and opposed in previous years. I wonder, why wouldn't these surgery centers, hospitals, doctors, and nurses not invest in and/or pledge to help create Surgical Technology programs and donate money for scholarships in rural communities? Rather than spend money on lobbying for this change? They profess to want to help single parents, underrepresented, marginalized and rural populations and people of color. The best help they can provide supporting to this targeted population which would be create real educational opportunities for them. This would create true upward mobility. They would not be constrained by the limit of what one surgery center/hospital offers and would able to change fields, or living locations, if they so choose to. The apprenticeship program does not appear to provide true change, if people aren't able to obtain a certification or an associate's degree after completion of the program.

From the presentation, Mr. Riggs states that potential apprentices would be eligible for benefits and appropriate wages once they become CSTs. However, it was also made clear that this is a trademark, and that these apprentices would never be able to become actual CSTs unless under the current approved accrediting bodies, therefore unable to receive appropriate benefits and wages. This would perpetuate the wealth gap in the targeted population. Keeping them in lower paying jobs, with no true financial impact.

As an Oregonian and potential patient, HB4106A should not be passed as there are too many unanswered questions:

1. What are the standards for this apprenticeship program?
2. Who is deciding the standards?
3. Will apprentices be less likely to report unethical and unlawful practices if their

employer/trainer/sponsor is managing the apprenticeship program?

4. How will the program address the requirements for understanding of the human body, diseases/virus, infection and prevention?
5. How will future wages for the apprentices be increase to meet the cost of inflation and cost of living, if not covered under CST wage and benefit pay?
6. Will they have liability insurance?

With many more questions unanswered, I urge you to reconsider and OPPOSE HB4106A. More needs to be discussed and answered prior to having a change with the current requirements in place.

Thank you for your time and consideration
Monica Martinez