

Chairman Nosse, members of the Committee

My name is Rachel Bruce. I am President of the Oregon State Assembly of the Association of Surgical Technologists representing 650 Oregon Certified Surgical Technologists today.

I'm proud to represent a very diverse profession.

I am also the Director of Surgical Technology at Linn-Benton Community College.

We oppose making changes to the surgical technologist law this session. House Bill 3596 was introduced at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour with the proponents stating it's a simple technical fix.

It is far from being a simple technical fix. It actually removes the requirement that surgical technologists graduate from an accredited surgical technology program, even with the amendment.

We know accredited education is essential for surgical patient safety.

Today I wanted to very briefly share with you that my program offers a distance component.

Apprenticeships are not the only option for rural Oregonians. My program has a hybrid model that allows students to live at home for the distance education online and do clinicals in their home communities.

They do have to come to town sometimes, which is critical for patient safety, so they're not practicing on patients when they're first learning, but these trips are short and intermittent and don't require the student to move. This is part of the reason community colleges like Umpqua don't have a program. Those students can come our program.

Also, we very often can place students for clinicals in their hometown. I have students placed in clinicals in all corners of Oregon including Ashland, Medford, Grants Pass, Coos Bay, Springfield, Corvallis, and Bend.

Thank you very much for your time.

Rachel Bruce, CST  
Director of Surgical Technology  
Linn-Benton Community College