

To the members of the House Health Care Committee and whom it may concern,

Good afternoon. My name is Ben Barfield and I am a practicing Anesthesiologist Assistant at Children's Hospital Colorado. I am writing today to share my experience as a CAA (Certified Anesthesiologist Assistant) and to show my support for the House Bill 4108. I earned my degree at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia and started my career in Atlanta. I have since moved to Denver, Colorado where I continue to practice. I have been trained and performed anesthesia for all types of surgical procedures ranging from outpatient surgery to cardiac surgery, from neurosurgery to transplant anesthesia, and from regional anesthesia to OB services. I am the Secretary for the Colorado Academy of Anesthesiologist Assistants and one of our faculty at University of Colorado Anesthesia Department. Over the years, it has been a significant amount of students I have taught/mentored that showed interest in working in Oregon. I have always been open to working in Oregon if the opportunity ever became available. I also work with a few CAAs that are from Oregon and very interested in moving back home.

Many people are not aware of what an Anesthesiologist Assistant is or even know the scope of practice. Anesthesiologist Assistants generally have a science undergraduate degree with a focus in pre-medical curriculum. AA schools in the past have required GRE and/or MCAT with the most recent change to requiring MCAT for admission. The degree is a Masters of Medical Science degree in Anesthesiology. Many of my classmates at Emory had medical or science backgrounds, but not all. We had teachers, lawyers, nurses, and those straight from undergraduate studies. The variety of backgrounds helped us as students come together and work toward the goal of becoming a valued and well respected member of the Anesthesia Care Team model.

Anesthesiologist Assistants are part of the Anesthesia Care Team. This ensures an anesthesiologist is present and readily available during the care of every patient. This model reduced patient risk and provides optimum patient safety. Under this model, patient's are guaranteed to receive care of the highest quality by two well-trained healthcare providers. There is currently a shortage of providers in the nation and CRNAs and CAAs fill the same roles within the Anesthesia Care Team model. My experiences in Georgia and Colorado have both had wonderful relationships between CRNAs and CAAs to ensure that the patient receives the best possible anesthesia care.

My ultimate goal with every trainee I have is to teach/train them to continue to pursue a challenging medical career in an intellectually stimulating environment that will help them to become a valued and well respected Anesthesiologist Assistant. Thank you for your time and allowing me to share my experience and thoughts on Anesthesiologist Assistants (AAs). I would be more than happy to answer and questions about Anesthesiologist Assistants and the profession. Below are some quick facts about Anesthesiologist Assistants. Have a good day

- CAAs are highly skilled health professionals who work under the direction of a licensed anesthesiologist.
- CAA training includes over 600 hours of classroom/laboratory education, 2600 hours of clinical anesthesia education, and more than 600 anesthetics administered for all types of surgery.

- Ben

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