

Greetings Committee Administrator Thiele-Cirka,

My name is Kevin Blick and I am a Certified Anesthesiologist Assistant currently employed at the Children's Hospital of Colorado. I have been practicing for the last 2.5 years and I am currently the treasurer of the Colorado Association of Anesthesiologist Assistants (CAAA). I am a strong proponent of Oregon passing AA licensure for both personal and professional reasons.

Let me first address my conflict of interest and disclose my personal reasons for wanting licensure: my girlfriend/fiancé is currently a student at the National College of Naturopathic Medicine in Portland. This has resulted in me visiting Oregon frequently over the past couple years. She has an interest in staying in Oregon because of the more progressive prescription rights it affords her profession. I would want to live in Oregon because I fell in love with the city of Portland and the state around it. I have never been to a place where the denizens are so friendly and look out for one another so consistently. It is also unique in how open and encouraging its culture is towards creativity and self-expression. What I love the most though are the landscapes that I thought were only seen in storybooks or in films set when America was without disillusion. That is why I want to work in Oregon. But now let me tell you why passing CAA licensure would help out the state:

Anesthesiologist Assistants work in a care team model, meaning that two providers (an Anesthesiologist and a CAA) care for a single patient. This allows a second skilled professional to be present during critical events of the procedure and for any possible emergency that may occur. Not only does this reduce patient risk and optimizes safety, Anesthesia Care Team models actually results in less cost to the hospital. Considering that there is also a nationwide shortage of anesthesia providers as well as the growing concern of healthcare costs, mid-level providers like CAAs are a practical and attractive option.

I would like to conclude by saying that here in Colorado, CAAs began working in 2009 and did not obtain state licensure until 2013. That same year, we opened our Anesthesiologist Assistant program at the University of Colorado hospital. This program allows students, who have backgrounds in pre-medical education and healthcare, a very promising future in a challenging and rewarding career. The very same could happen for the dedicated students of Oregon if this bill passes. I thank you so much for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Kevin Blick, CAA