

From: [Block, Elizabeth](#)
To: [ThieleCirka Sandy](#)
Subject: Support of House Bill 4108
Date: Thursday, February 04, 2016 9:23:03 PM

Dear Members of the House Health Care Committee,

I am writing to request your support for House Bill 4108, which would license CAA's to practice in Oregon. Although I am not from Oregon, we have family in Portland and would love the opportunity to work there. As of right now, it's not an option for us to relocate and have my children closer to their cousins. We would love to have that opportunity with your support of HB 4108.

CAA's practice within the Anesthesia care team, which ensures an anesthesiologist is involved in the care of every patient, resulting in the highest level of care. CAA's are highly trained at a Master's level and graduate with over 2600 clinical hours and 600 classroom/laboratory hours. Upon graduation, we must certify with written board examination, complete 40 hours of CME's every 2 years, and we must re-certify every 6 years with a written exam.

With the growing need for anesthesia providers, CAA's can help fill the gap and function identically to CRNAs within the anesthesia care team. At Children's Hospital Colorado, we have 14 CAA's and 13 CRNAs. We all function in the exact manner within the anesthesia care team. We get along so well that no one even notices or knows who is a CRNA or a CAA. I still get asked for my title when in the OR by nurses and I'm the program director for University of Colorado's AA program! We're all just a great team that collaborates and works well together.

I graduated from Emory University's Master of Medical Science in Anesthesiology program in 2010, and have been working as a CAA at Children's Hospital Colorado for almost six years. Prior to entering graduate AA school, I received my undergraduate degree from Indiana University in Biology and Chemistry. I took the MCAT and was all set to apply to medical schools until I stumbled upon the AA profession. At the time (2008), CAA's were not licensed to practice in Indiana, so my husband and I decided to relocate to a practicing state once I graduated. Indiana (our home state) recently passed licensure, but we are looking to stay in the west. We always had a desire to move out west, and Colorado was the farthest we could get, and we were very thankful for that as we love Colorado.

In 2012 I was recruited by University of Colorado to start their very own Master's of Medical Science in Anesthesiology program. As program director, I have immense knowledge of CAA training and scope of practice. Our graduates are trained at the highest level by Anesthesiologists both in the classroom and in the operating room. AA programs must be housed in a school of medicine that either already has an anesthesia residency program, or one that has all the necessary items to house an anesthesia residency. Our students train with our anesthesia residents and our attending anesthesiologists, as well as CAA faculty and CRNAs. I currently have several AA students in my program that are from Oregon and would love the opportunity to return to their home state upon graduation. Additionally, every year we have seen increasing applicants from all over the west, especially Oregon, Washing and California. I anticipate these numbers to continue to climb as our marketing efforts reach more and more students in the west.

I am beyond grateful for the opportunity to practice as a CAA. With your support of HB 4108, you will offer

this opportunity to premedical students in Oregon and positively impact their lives, and the lives of their future patients, immensely.

I sincerely appreciate your consideration and support of this bill.

Nikki Block, CAA, MMSc
Program Director, Master of Medical Science in Anesthesiology Program
University of Colorado, School of Medicine
Instructor, Children's Hospital Colorado
Department of Anesthesiology
Elizabeth.block@ucdenver.edu