

Memorandum in Support - A1745 (Gottfried) and S2563 (Bailey) Codifying CRNA Scope of Practice

American Nurses Association - New York (ANA-NY) is a professional nursing organization representing the interests of New York State's 260,000 registered nurses. ANA-NY advances the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing care, supporting the professional and educational advancement of nurses, and promoting the welfare of nurses to the end that all people may have better health care.

ANA-NY supports enacting scope of practice provisions for Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs). Authorizing CRNAs to practice to their full scope of education, training and experience as other states have done will finally enable NY to ensure greater access to high quality, more cost-effective anesthesia services especially in underserved areas, including our Upstate, rural hospitals.

CRNAs have been providing anesthesia care in New York State for more than 150 years. Today, New York's 1,400 practicing CRNAs work in hospitals, ambulatory surgery centers, physicians' offices, pain management clinics, and for the Veterans Administration. CRNAs provide excellent care for every type of procedure, every category of patient and in every setting where anesthesia services are given.

CRNAs are masters and doctoral degree nurses with national certification who practice across healthcare settings, administering approximately 65 percent of all anesthetics provided in the U.S. CRNAs are also the primary anesthesia providers in the majority of rural hospitals throughout New York State. Without CRNAs, many facilities would not be able to offer essential services including trauma and obstetrical care.

Despite having three of the strongest CRNA graduate programs in the country at SUNY Buffalo, Columbia University, and Albany Medical College—programs that are on the forefront of nurse anesthesia education—New York is one of the only states that does not recognize CRNAs and the critical services they provide. We must act to remedy that gap in our education law to allow proper regulatory enforcement and promote professional accountability.

This legislation is needed to grant CRNA's the full authority to administer patient care commensurate with their advanced education, training and experience and to ensure anesthesia services are safe and affordable for every patient in New York State.

For the above reasons, ANA-NY strongly supports A1745 (Gottfried) and S2563 (Bailey), which would enact scope of practice provisions for CRNAs.