

Hello House Committee on Healthcare members,

I am the current Treasurer of the Oregon Association of Surgical Technologist, and was OAST President back when we successfully fought to get HB2876 passed.

I am writing you today concerning HB2464 coming up to the House Committee on Healthcare this Mar 18th.

House Bill 2464 would amend the language of HB2876, I worked with Representative Buehler And Representative Greenlick back in 2015, they were instrumental in the success of HB2876. That bill set the baseline for all Surgical Technologist to be certified thru the NBSTFA to be able to work Oregon.

HB2464 will create exactly the situation we fought to stop back then, the use of unqualified and poorly trained personnel at the bedside.

Reading the bill, there are no guidelines for training, minimum education, not to mention the development of sterile consciousness or Anatomy and Physiology.

The OASCA declares that a emergency exists, that is simply not true. If they paid a decent wage to their technicians, they wouldn't have to train a housekeeper or receptionist to scrub. Remember, this is the person responsible for the sterility of the instruments your Surgeon will use to perform your surgery. CST's graduate from a 2 year program, and receive an associates degree.

Look at what is happening at St Charles in Bend. Surgeons are cancelling their cases because the hospital brought in unqualified personnel to work at the bedside.

As I write this letter The Medical Technicians at ST Charles are entering their 2nd week of their strike, I believe if this sort of bill becomes law, it will undermine any future attempt by any medical specialty to fight for a decent living wage and safe working conditions. Why would a Hospital pay a highly skilled technician competitive wages, when they can just train a guy off the street.

With our current Covid crisis, they'll have no concept of viruses , the maintenance of antisepsis, Do you want your surgery performed with a poorly trained Technician preparing the instruments your surgeon is trusting to be sterile. One of the most important tasks a CST performs is creating and maintaining a sterile environment.

We don't train RN's on the job, Rad techs, Lab techs, CT techs, Sonogram techs. All highly skilled professions, just like Certified Surgical Technologist.

I believe with the increased public scrutiny of the medical field, apprenticeship for a surgical technologist will open surgery centers and hospitals to litigation.

This is important, we can't let greed or avarice diminish the stellar work CST's do in this State. These are people who you never meet, they work behind the scenes, behind the mask, ensuring your safety. Your Surgeon depends on them to help him provide a good outcome for you or your loved ones

I have been a CST since 1981, I've scrubbed all over the states, been working here in Oregon since 1992. I've seen on the job trained scrubs, i've had to make them break scrub because they put their gloves or gown on wrong. Tear down the entire back table because of a break in sterility.

Believe me when I say it. A poorly trained scrub is dangerous, when there's a break in sterility, Your CST recognises it and knows the steps to take to fix it.

thank you for your time,d.

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