

March 16, 2021

Dear Chair Prusak, members of the House Health Committee,

I am writing you today to request your support for HB 2464, which would create a common sense solution to the shortage of certified surgical technologists in Oregon.

My ASC, the Willamette Surgery Center, is located in Salem on State Street just 3 blocks east of the Capital Building. The cases done at our center are primarily orthopedic. We perform over 4200 cases a year to include outpatient total joint replacements. We work together with 22 Medical Staff Members; anesthesiologists, surgeons and currently employ 46 staff members. Seven of our staff members are surgical technologists whom play an essential role in every surgical case performed at WSC.

My facility would benefit directly by having an apprenticeship program available for surgical technologists. There is a real shortage of available surgical technologist staff, and this will create a unique opportunity to create more jobs in rural Oregon. The current avenues for surgical technologist certification have not met the demands from the health care industry, and this working solution achieves the goal of maintaining adequate training and education for surgical technologists by obtaining certification.

I strongly believe that including NCCT as an accrediting body to the current surgical technology certifying bodies would enhance the workforce and quality of care to patients significantly. We have been impressed by Health STAR Initiative's proposed clinical programs and the outline on how potential surgical technologists can have on the ground experience in addition to matching clinical education currently required.

Further, we have been impressed by the infection prevention continuing education that has already been made available by OASCA and the newly formed partnership with Health STAR Initiative. Next month, there is a webinar that covers Best Practices in Surgical Instrument Reprocessing, and a second session on Conducting a Moisture Assessment. This is taught by nationally recognized faculty and will provide an interactive opportunity for staff to learn more about infection prevention.

Thank you for your time and consideration to support HB 2464.

Sincerely,