



March 17, 2021

Dear Chair Prusak, members of the House Health Committee,

I am writing you today on behalf of the surgeons at River Road Surgery Center to request your support for HB 2464. This bill will create a commonsense solution to the shortage of certified surgical technologists in Oregon.

Over the last twenty years, River Road Surgery Center has employed several surgical technologists – they are increasingly difficult to find. Our current surgical technologist trained at Portland’s Concorde over ten years ago - we were lucky she had strong ties to Salem. Six years ago she started training with one of our surgeons and is now a certified first assist helping with complex head and neck surgeries. Qualified apprenticeship programs allow local individuals to learn on the job, develop advanced skills, and helps to keep them in the community.

Our 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.

We 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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeffrey M. Baird".

Jeffrey M. Baird, MBA, CMPE  
Administrator  
River Road Surgery Center

