

Submitter: John Hadley
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure: HB4106

Dear Oregon Senate,

I am sincerely opposed to HB 4106. I am a program director of a surgical technology program and have worked in surgery for almost 40 years. Surgical technologists that graduate from an accredited program and become certified are able to provide safe patient care that is based on best practices. They are held to standards that provide them the knowledge and experience to advocate for surgical patients through formal education. If your loved one is having a surgical procedure, I would hope that you would want a professional with a surgical conscience being vigilant about what best practices your loved one might be receiving.

Operating room fires, surgical site infections, medication errors, and unwanted adverse patient events that have undesired outcomes are more common when there are improperly trained personnel filling roles that require formal education. Filling a surgical technologist position with an unprepared person is a safety risk that is not sustainable over time. It might place a bandaid on the problem temporarily, but when the first patient does not leave the operating room alive due to a lack of knowledge in safety or preparedness, who will you blame? What if it is your mother?

Many of us are trying to pass legislation in our states to require that all surgical technologists are certified. We want the safest care for all patients. Outcomes do not improve without adherence to best practice guidelines. I beg you to rethink what you are looking at. It is a giant step backward in time and puts surgical patients at risk. Will the public support such a move? Patients will consider traveling out of your state to find better care. I spent many years as a surgical technologist working in a highly acclaimed institution that collected patients from all over the world seeking a safer environment than they could receive where they were living.

Patients research outcomes and avoid facilities that cannot provide adequate care. I hope that you will consider the patient on the operating table and make an appropriate decision that you can live with both ethically and morally.

Best regards,
Professor John Hadley