

Submitter: Brian Mitchell
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2591

Chair Patterson and members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am an anesthesiologist who has practiced in the state of Oregon since completing my residency at OHSU in 2010. I strongly urge you to support HB 2591 to help stabilize the anesthesia workforce in the state of Oregon.

Since 2010, I have helped train and support anesthesiology residents and student nurse anesthetists at the only training programs in the state of Oregon. Currently there is a significant shortage of anesthesiologists and CRNAs in both Oregon and nationwide. There are significant economic headwinds in Oregon compared to other states which have pushed many of our recent trainees to leave the state for higher wages and a lower cost of living. This allows them to more efficiently pay off their significant educational debts. It was clear from the workforce survey of Oregon anesthesiologists last year that educational debt support could help retain our recent graduates. Without sufficient anesthesiologists and CRNAs, Oregonians will not be able to receive required elective or emergent procedures or surgeries. Every week I receive emails, letters and texts attempting to entice me to leave Oregon for a brighter economic future at another hospital outside of Oregon. Fortunately, my family and I setup roots in Oregon that will be hard to break and as a federal employee I was able to benefit from an educational debt relief program. Allowing the OHA to add anesthesiologists and CRNAs to the loan forgiveness program will ensure that our recent trainees set down roots in Oregon and continue to be here for Oregonians that need both elective and emergency procedures and operations.

Best,
Brian Mitchell, MD