

Statement of Ty Townsend
Senate Commerce Committee
Regarding 2020 Senate Bill 366
Oral Neutral Testimony
February 17, 2020

Madam Chair and members:

My name is Ty Townsend. My family settled in Kansas as immigrants from Germany, I graduated high school in Kansas and completed my undergraduate degree from Emporia State University before graduating from Case Western Reserve University with a Master of Science in Anesthesiology. For 19 years I have worked as a Certified Anesthesiologist Assistant with the last 14 years as a Kansas resident. I also have 14 years of military service with active duty service during the first gulf war.

As noted, I am a licensed Certified Anesthesiologist Assistant (CAA) living in Kansas, however, I must work in Missouri since Kansas does not license Anesthesiologist Assistants. Nineteen jurisdictions allow CAA's to practice, including three of the four states surrounding Kansas.

There are many CAAs across the country that call Kansas "home" because they grew up here or still have family here. Unfortunately, our state licensure laws don't permit CAAs to work here. I'm fortunate in that I can work in Missouri and live in the Kansas, but there is much more to Kansas than the Kansas City metro area and there are CAAs eager to work in various parts of our state, including Wichita, Salina and Topeka.

For the last couple of years, the Kansas Society of Anesthesiologist and the Kansas Academy of Anesthesiologist Assistants have asked the state to create licensure for CAA's. The Kansas Department of Health & Environment, after a four-month technical review, recommended that CAA's be licensed here. The KSA and KSAAA will continue our efforts to encourage the legislature to license CAA's and recognize the value Certified Anesthesiologist Assistants provide.

I appear as a neutral conferee today because SB 366 does not help my situation or that of my out-of-state colleagues. This bill is, however, a very clear recognition that professional licensing barriers can prevent quality professionals from coming to the great state of Kansas. They prevent well educated and dedicated veterans and non-veterans alike from bringing their families to the state they would like to call home. These professional licensing barriers literally prevent more people coming to Kansas to work, raise families, pay taxes and contribute to their communities. As such, licensing laws can clearly be a burden to Kansas' economic future.

I congratulate you on the wisdom to enact the existing law for veterans and their spouses and for the foresight to expand this concept to others who wish to make Kansas a great place to live and work. I hope you will pass SB 366 and someday soon consider the other barriers to growth created by our state licensing laws. Thank you.