

WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY

Sen. Gene Suellentrop  
Chair, Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

My name is Timothy Walsh and I am an Assistant Professor of Anesthesiology at the University of Kansas. Prior to my current position at KU I attended medical school at Tufts University in Massachusetts and completed residency training at UCLA Medical Center in California. I am writing in support of licensing Certified Anesthesiologist Assistants (CAAs) in Kansas.

Currently all other physicians in Kansas have the choice of hiring Nurse Practitioners (NPs) or Physician Assistants (PAs) as midlevel providers. Unfortunately anesthesiologists have only the NP equivalent in CRNAs. This leads to a monopoly for physician extenders in Anesthesia. With no other choice, Anesthesia departments are frequently forced to pay significantly higher salaries and overtime to the CRNAs.

CAAs, the PA equivalent, have similar training as CRNA's and are capable of covering all case types with similar safety records. They add diversity to the work force, competition to compensation models, and an alternative philosophy to the care team model. There are many areas in Kansas in desperate need of more Anesthesia providers and CAAs could easily help fill that void.

CAA students currently train in Missouri, Colorado and other states, but those whose home is Kansas must go elsewhere to work when they finish training. There are already CAA's that live in Kansas but must travel across state lines to practice. It is time for Kansas to join the multitude of other states that allow CAAs to practice in the care team model.

Sincerely,

Timothy Walsh MD