



The Maryland State Medical Society
1211 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, MD 21201-5516
410.539.0872
Fax: 410.547.0915
1.800.492.1056
www.medchi.org

TO: The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair
Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Bonnie Cullison

FROM: J. Steven Wise
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
Danna L. Kauffman
Christine K. Krone

DATE: February 1, 2022

RE: **OPPOSE** – House Bill 55 – *Health Occupations – Nurse Anesthetists – Drug Authority and Collaboration*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, **opposes** House Bill 55.

House Bill 55 proposes to allow a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) to prescribe medications “without obtaining approval from a practitioner with whom the nurse anesthetist collaborates...”. Furthermore, House Bill 55 allows a CRNA to collaborate with a podiatrist relative to the administration of and recovery from anesthesia, without consultation with a physician.

MedChi has serious concerns about the types of medication that might be prescribed by a CRNA under the legislation. The only apparent limitation on what drugs can be prescribed are that they be “in connection with the delivery of anesthesia,” an open-ended clause that may include pain medications and others.

We also do not understand the need for a CRNA to be writing a prescription. For example, a patient who has received anesthesia for purposes of surgery will normally have a physician (surgeon) present who could write any needed prescription. Why is this not sufficient? When one considers that it will be the physician who will be sued and held responsible for any bad outcome from the surgical procedure, it is understandable that the physician will want to write any prescription that may affect the outcome. To make matters worse, under the bill, a CRNA can write a prescription without approval from the physician, and it can be for a period of up to 10 days.

For these reasons, MedChi opposes House Bill 55.

For more information call:

J. Steven Wise
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
Danna L. Kauffman
Christine K. Krone
410-244-7000