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Judicial Proceedings Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
The Maryland State Senate Finance Committee  
The Honorable Pamela Beidle  
3 East Miller Senate Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: Senate Bill 874: *Hospitals and Ambulatory Surgical Facilities - Surgical Technologists***

Dear Chairwoman Beidle and Members of the Committee,

There are 128,900 surgical technologists employed nationwide including 1,930 in Maryland. Surgical technologists are the surgical team members that maintain the sterile surgical field, ensuring that members of the surgical team adhere to sterile technique to prevent surgical site infections. Certified Surgical Technologists serve as the surgeon's second-in-command providing instruments and supplies to the surgeon, preventing patient death and harm related to medication, as well as infections, and bleeding.

Surgical technologists must operate effectively to prevent "never events," like medication errors, surgical implant errors, unintended retained surgical items, patient burns, and incorrect site surgery.

Typically, surgical technologists must earn an associate degree from an accredited institution to practice. There are seven accredited programs throughout the state and the certification exam price ranges from \$190 to \$290. Nonetheless, surgical technologists are not regulated in most states including Maryland.

Senate Bill 874 would require that Surgical technologists graduate from an accredited educational program and pass the certified surgical technologist exam (with exceptions for all currently employed surgical technologists and military-trained surgical technologists). Furthermore, surgical technologists who have graduated from an accredited program but are not yet certified have 18 months to obtain certification.

Senate Bill 874 also stipulates that oversight is through the Department of Health to verify surgical technologist compliance upon request, requiring no change and minimal effort by hospitals and ambulatory surgery centers. The bill will not require a new licensing regime because health care facilities verify the surgical technologist, and apprenticeships can be used as the clinical experience in the credentialed education program.

Surgical technologists are an integral part of our healthcare system and we owe it to our residents to ensure that when they enter surgery, they can be certain their whole team is properly trained.

I appreciate the Committee's consideration of Senate Bill 874 and will be happy to answer any questions the Committee may have.