

03/04/2026

Senate Finance Committee  
11 Bladen Street, 3 East Miller  
Senate Office Building,  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 951/ House Bill 1558 regarding the licensing of anesthesiologist assistants in Maryland. I am a Maryland resident and a practicing anesthesiologist, and I have firsthand knowledge of the workforce and challenges facing perioperative and anesthesiology care in our state.

The formal recognition and licensure of Certified Anesthesiologist Assistants (CAAs) would represent a meaningful and evidence-based expansion of Maryland's anesthesia workforce. CAAs are highly trained anesthesia professionals who practice exclusively within the anesthesia care team model and under the direct supervision of a licensed anesthesiologist. Their education is nationally standardized, science-based, and modeled after physician training, with rigorous clinical and didactic requirements.

Currently, CCAs are licensed and practicing safely in 23 states and the District of Columbia. In these jurisdictions, their integration into anesthesia teams has demonstrably enhanced workforce flexibility, improved operating room efficiency, and expanded access to procedural care without compromising patient safety. The benefits of their inclusion into the anesthesia team are evident in these locations, where anesthesia care remains physician-led, and quality metrics remain strong.

Maryland hospitals continue to face staffing pressures driven by rising surgical volumes, workforce shortages, and growing demands for sub-specialty care. These pressures are particularly acute in time-sensitive environments such as trauma centers, labor and delivery units, and complex surgical programs. Licensing CAAs would enable anesthesiologists to deliver high-quality anesthesia services more effectively across care settings while maintaining the safety standards Maryland patients expect.

As a Maryland resident and practicing anesthesiologist, I believe this bill will enhance access to patient care, support hospital operations, and preserve the quality of anesthesia care in our state.

I respectfully urge the committee to support Senate Bill 951/House Bill 1558. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ashlee V. Gourdine, M.D.