

House Health Committee  
6 Bladen Street  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Members of the House Health Committee,

As a longtime Maryland resident, I am writing in support of House Bill 1558—State Board of Physicians—Anesthesiologist Assistants—Licensing. This bill would allow for the licensure of Certified Anesthesiologist Assistants (CAAs) in the state of Maryland, adding Maryland to the 23 states where CAAs are currently licensed, including Virginia and the District of Columbia. CAAs receive a graduate level education, attain standardized national certification with ongoing continuing education and recertification requirements, and practice exclusively in the Anesthesia Care Team (ACT) model under the supervision of a physician anesthesiologist.

I have been practicing as a CAA for nine years, and thus far I have spent my entire career working in the District of Columbia. Maryland hospitals and surgery centers face anesthesia staffing pressures that limit or delay procedures, and by not licensing CAAs Maryland is preventing themselves from accessing a deep and robust talent pool from within their own state. It costs more to hire locums and travelers than to hire long-term, full-time anesthetists. By adding CAAs to existing ACT models, Maryland can expand capacity without altering physician leadership and allow Maryland CAAs to provide medical care to their Maryland friends and neighbors in Maryland hospitals.

In the last four years, five other states have adopted CAA licensure. I urge you to support this bill and add Maryland to that list. Maryland CAAs would gladly pay the license fee in full to be able to decrease commute times, allowing CAAs living in Maryland the opportunity to work where they live.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ash Dechow".

Ashleigh Dechow, CAA  
Silver Spring, MD