

Re: Educator's Letter of Support

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Public Health:

It is a privilege to write to you expressing my utmost support for the bill SB-338, mandatory certification obtainment and renewal for surgical technologists in Kansas.

I have been a **Certified Surgical Technologist (CST)** for nearly 11 years. I obtained my education in Aurora, Colorado, and began practicing surgical technology at *Harmony Ambulatory Surgery Center* in Fort Collins, CO in 2006. I became certified in March, 2007. I quickly developed a passion for orthopedic surgery, and became the main surgical tech for Dr. Thomas Pazik, M.D.. Dr. Pazik was known in our department for his dedication to maintaining the sterile field throughout his many procedures, as he was known in the community to have very successful surgical outcomes. He made it clear that all staff in his room must be properly educated, trained and equally devoted to his patients' successful outcomes.

Being the new graduate I was at the time, I was a sponge for more knowledge and eager to hone my skills as a surgical technologist. Because of Dr. Pazik's passion for the safety of his patients, what nuances I didn't yet know I learned fast, and was soon regarded as an integral team member in his rooms. I developed a mantra that no patient would suffer on account of me and I have maintained that passion in my entire practice.

In 2008, I relocated to Olathe, Kansas, and began practicing at *Olathe Medical Center* where I ultimately joined the Ortho Team and continued providing the best possible patient care each day. Over the years, I was able to train new hires and precept surgical technology students and discovered a passion to teach.

In 2014, I accepted the position as ***Surgical Technology Program Director at Neosho County Community College*** and have helped produce 24 new surgical technologists thus far. During their 2-year training in our program, we emphasize patient safety above all else, and take the time to teach our students *why* we do what we do so they may know *how* to respond in an emergency. My colleagues and I believe that because the operating room is not free from complications and unexpected events, it is paramount that surgical technologists know how to anticipate these events as well as respond appropriately when they occur.

Taking the time during a student's educational journey to instill these abilities is the leading reason why I believe all surgical technologists ought to be certified in order to practice surgical technology in our Kansas hospitals. No patient expects, or desires, for their procedure to have complications, but complications are a reality of the surgical world and every patient deserves a certified surgical technologist alongside the licensed physicians and nurses that knows how to anticipate those complications and the team's needs as a result before they even happen.

I hope you will consider this bill an absolute necessity in our community's hospitals, surgical centers and maternity units. After all, who would you want standing beside the surgeon when *you* are the patient on the operating room table?

I appreciate the opportunity to share with you my history as a surgical technologist, and passion for taking care of people. I welcome any questions you may have regarding SB-338.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

/s/Jennifer Cain, CST

Surgical Technology Program Director

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