



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS  
SOUTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

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Senator Danny Verdin  
Chair, Senate Medical Affairs Committee

Dear Senator Verdin,

On behalf of the South Carolina Chapter of the American College of Surgeons (ACS), I am writing to urge you to oppose bill S563 that would remove the physician supervision requirement for Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs).

The ACS ([www.facs.org](http://www.facs.org)) has a strong history of addressing matters relating to quality patient care and safety, and we are concerned that the changes proposed by S563 would allow CRNAs to practice without the training and education requirements imposed on medical doctors. The provision of anesthesia is the practice of medicine and best administered when provided in the anesthesia care team (an anesthesiologist along with the anesthetist and the surgeon). In the small number of cases where the surgeon is supervising the nurse anesthetist, the surgeon is present and able to address any emergent situations that may occur. Removing not only the anesthesiologist, but also the surgeon is not only unnecessary, but would lower the standard of care that patients expect and deserve.

Removing any and all physicians from providing medical expertise and supervision during the administration of anesthesia would place patients at a great risk. South Carolina's patients do not deserve a lower standard of care and we encourage you and the Medical Affairs Committee to keep in place the current law that has worked, is working and continues to provide the safest and highest quality of care throughout South Carolina.

Our national organization, the American College of Surgeons has issued the following statement:

*In the interest of patient safety and the provision of quality care, the American College of Surgeons believes that unsupervised practice by CRNAs places patients in jeopardy. As such, the ACS urges you to protect patient safety and preserve patient centered, physician led care for South Carolina's citizens and oppose any legislation that would remove the physician supervision requirement for CRNAs.*

Physicians are uniquely qualified, by extensive education and training, to provide medical diagnosis, care, and treatment of the patient. Because of our medical knowledge, we are best able to recognize, intervene and manage the medical complications that exist before, during and after surgery. While anesthesia has become safer, plenty of risks remain. Those risks necessitate retaining physician supervision of nurse anesthetists.

Respectfully yours,

Stephen A. Fann, MD, FACS

President - South Carolina Chapter, American College of Surgeons