



RI Department of Health
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Providence, RI 02908-5097

TTY: 771
www.health.ri.gov

May 14, 2024

Susan R. Donovan, Chair
House Committee on Health and Human Services
State House
82 Smith St.
Providence, RI 02903

RE: H 8237 -- An Act Relating to Businesses and Professions – Nurse Anesthetists

Dear Chair Donovan:

Please accept this letter regarding H 8237. This legislation would establish that the administration of drugs classified by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as general anesthetics (including propofol and ketamine) for minimal, moderate, deep sedation, or general anesthesia is not, generally, within the "scope of practice" of registered nurses and advanced practice registered nurses (other than licensed certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs)) as defined in R.I. Gen. Laws § 5-34-3. The act would restrict the administration of anesthesia medications to licensed CRNAs, with certain exceptions, and would take effect upon passage.

Please know the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) has received correspondence from the Rhode Island Association of Nurse Anesthetists regarding the administration of general anesthetics by non-CRNAs. RIDOH is in the process of reviewing current statutory and regulatory requirements as well as the latest clinical guidance regarding this practice. RIDOH has met with various professional boards and groups and has reached out to national clinical subject matter experts to consult with RIDOH on the merits and safety of this practice.

I look forward to working with the Committee, key stakeholders, and clinical subject matter experts during this review to suggest any legislative and/or regulatory changes that may be needed to protect patient health and safety and align with current clinical guidance and best practices.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Staci A. Fischer, MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Staci Fischer, MD
Acting Director

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services
The Honorable Joseph M. McNamara
Nicole McCarty, Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy