

## RN as Circulator Legislation Testimony

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Good morning Senator Harris, Representative Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Jeanne Ring, and today I am speaking for myself, as a supporter of the AORN's position that "every surgical patient deserves a periOperative nurse" caring for them while undergoing a surgical procedure. Today I am asking for your support for the RN Circulator Bill #5288.

I have been a periOperative registered nurse for thirty five years and have functioned in the role of the circulator and as a scrub nurse. The circulating nurse, along with our periOperative partners, the anesthesiologist, surgeon, surgical technologist, surgical residents, work together to form a team and perform functions specific to their individual roles. A circulating nurse is a professionally prepared registered nurse, responsible for coordinating procedures while maintaining the patient's safety, and comfort with the patient being the focal point in giving care. My nursing education and the care I provide for my patients are grounded in evidenced based practices, critical thinking skills, and accurate assessments.

Many of you sitting in this room today may have had a surgical procedure, or at least may have known someone who has. When a patient is told that they need surgery, they search out the best surgeon, and a hospital with a proven record with positive patient outcomes. But the average citizen would never think to ask their surgeon about who will care for them in the Operating Room. They assume that their doctor and the hospital will

automatically provide everything that they need. Most will not ask about the surgical team and who will be coordinating their care while they are under anesthesia and unable to speak for themselves. We are fortunate that RN's, in the state of Connecticut, are employed in the role of the circulator. Some of the safety issues I am referring to are: assessing and acting appropriately in emergencies, monitoring the patient for infection control, protects patients from injuries by monitoring and administering of medications, positioning techniques, and protecting the patient from burns. An expert on aseptic technique, knowledge in pain management the RN circulator will maintain the patient's privacy, provide a care plan, educate the patient in self care and is instrumental in family teaching. It is the RN Circulator who will hold the patients hand, provide emotional support and act as the patient advocate when they need it most. These roles cannot be delegated to unlicensed assistive personnel. The RN circulator is a critical care nurse whose education is grounded in the biological and social sciences and must update skills with continuing education.

The RN Circulator provides direct patient care whose primary responsibility is to protect patients, provide expert care and most of all insure patient safety. While the debates continue in Washington on the direction of health care in our country, the role of the RN Circulator must be preserved. This is what our citizens deserve. This is what the AORN advocates. Our patients expect no less than the best from us. I ask that you support the RN Circulator Bill #5288. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.