

Seth Rabinowitz
Harrison

Senator Sanborn, Representative Teplar, and members of the Health Coverage, Insurance, & Financial Services committee.

My name is Seth Rabinowitz and I am a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist at Bridgton Hospital. I have been a Maine resident for 19 years and practicing as a CRNA in Maine for 16 years. I was the Chief CRNA at Central Maine Medical Center, a prior President of the Maine Association of Nurse Anesthetists, and currently I am a director on the board the Maine Association of Nurse Anesthetists. I am testifying in support of LD 254.

CRNAs have been providing anesthesia care for 150 years. We were the first providers of anesthesia and have maintained a tradition of high quality, evidence driven care that has served the patients of Maine and the United States at home and abroad. We practice in all settings including large hospitals, stand alone surgery centers, critical access and rural hospitals, and the most austere of surgical theaters serving our service men and women abroad.

We are highly educated master and doctorally prepared nurses, and have a minimum of two years of critical care nursing prior to entering our advanced practice education programs. As evidenced by the Covid pandemic CRNAs have utilized this unique background, combined with our advanced practice anesthesia skills, to help fill a gap in the chain of care for the sickest of people in the nations ICUs. CRNAs are performing life saving care, managing the most critically patients on ventilators, and providing another expert set of eyes and hands in an already stretched thin health care workforce.

CRNAs work in a multitude of settings, from collaborative teams with our physician anesthesiologist colleagues, to independent practice in the most rural of settings such as where I work. We provide high quality, cost effective care in places to patients who would otherwise not have access to certain surgical procedures without extensive travel and expense.

The current private insurance reimbursement situation for CRNAs billing directly in Maine is burdensome and unfair. This is exactly how patients wind up with surprise billing. We are simply asking for reimbursement for services rendered. It is a fair and equitable legislation that would put CRNAs on par with other Advanced Practice Registered Nurses in Maine, and would have no fiscal impact on the state of Maine.