



# ARC/STSA

Accreditation Review Council On Education  
In Surgical Technology And Surgical Assisting

*Testimony on Oregon House Bill 3596 presented to the Oregon State Legislature House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care, March 27, 2023.*

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Goodwin and Nelson, and Members of the Committee,

Good evening. My name is Ron Kruzel, and I am the executive director of the Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting. The ARC/STSA is the Committee on Accreditation for surgical technology education programs within the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs, or CAAHEP.

I am here today to speak in opposition to Oregon House Bill 3596, which modifies House Bill 4106 by removing the requirement that surgical technology apprenticeship programs in Oregon must include a nationally accredited educational program. This action will create a two-tiered system of education for surgical technologists in the state of Oregon, much to the detriment of the citizens of the state and specifically to the surgical patient. The complexities of care for the surgical patient demand no less than the current curriculum requirements for a fully accredited educational program in surgical technology.

House Bill 3596 appears to be a short-term solution that is simply not in the best interest of the surgical patient and will inevitably lead to patient care and safety concerns.

ARC/STSA is working nationwide to assist our accredited educational programs and their hospital and ambulatory surgery center partners in

establishing innovative ways to address the surgical technologist workforce shortage. Cooperation to accelerate education while maintaining the minimum educational requirements of accredited educational programs is the solution to the current workforce challenge. Cooperation in apprenticeship training is a part of that partnership.

There are many apprenticeship models being developed nationwide that fully address the immediacy of the workforce shortage while maintaining the current accredited education process that has been 50 years in the making. Nationally, healthcare and hospital organizations are partnering with CAAHEP-accredited educational programs in surgical technology to solve this concern. ARC/STSA is facilitating many of these discussions and providing support for innovation that maintains educational standards. It can be done in Oregon as well.

There are solutions that will maintain appropriate education of the surgical technologist, an operating room team member critical to the patient's well-being in surgery. Oregon has already made that commitment to the citizens of the state, and I respectfully propose that House Bill 3596 is not in the best interest of surgical patients in Oregon.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in opposition to House Bill 3596.



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