



August 16, 2013

Georgia Board of Nursing
Sylvia Bond, RN MSN MBA, Executive Director
237 Coliseum Drive
Macon, GA 31217-3858

Dear Ms. Bond:

Re: House bill 315; continuing competency and certification

I am writing on behalf of the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN) to comment on House Bill 315, the continued competency bill recently signed into law by Governor Nathan Deal.

AORN represents the interests of 160,000 perioperative registered nurses, including over 43,000 registered nurse members in the United States and abroad who facilitate the management, teaching, and practice of perioperative nursing. There are over 1160 perioperative registered nurses in Georgia represented by AORN.

Perioperative registered nursing is a specialized area of nursing practice. As a fundamental member of the surgical team, the perioperative registered nurse can function in the role of circulator, scrub person, or first assistant during surgery. Many perioperative nurses maintain specialty certification in operating room nursing. The CNOR certification is currently held by more than 33,500 perioperative nurses nationwide. In addition, over 1,500 perioperative nurses who practice as first assistants at surgery maintain the CRNFA certification. More information on these certifications is available from the Competency & Credentialing Institute at <http://www.cc-institute.org/>

The CNOR certification is currently accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) and the American Board for Specialty Nursing Certification (ABSNC), and the CRNFA certification is currently accredited by NCCA. The NCCA and the ABSNC assure the continued integrity of the CNOR and CRNFA credentials.

The newly added section b.1(2) under 43-26-9 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated specifies that an applicant for a registered professional nurse license renewal may meet the new competency standards by maintaining certification or recertification by a national certifying body recognized by the Board. The bill does not specify how the Board will determine which certifying bodies it will recognize. Given the rigor of the CNOR and CRNFA certification programs and the ongoing practice requirements for CNORs and CRNFAs, it is

AORN's hope that the Georgia Board of Nursing will recognize the CNOR and CRNFA certifications. Alternatively, the Board could simply recognize those certifications meeting NCCA and/or ABSNC standards.

Thank you for your consideration. We applaud the Board's attention to ensuring the continued competency of Georgia's registered professional nurses. If you have any questions, please contact me directly at (303) 755-6304, ext. 220.

Sincerely,



Linda Groah, MSN RN CNOR NEA-BC FAAN
CEO/Executive Director
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses

cc: Patricia R. Moody, RN CNOR, AORN state legislative coordinator
Amy Hader, JD, AORN Director, Legal and Government Affairs