



Pennsylvania National Guard Associations

National Guard Association of Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania National Guard Enlisted Association

July 27, 2020

PNGAS Seeks Final Passage Votes for S.B. 325 (Gordner) | H.B. 1064 (Toohil)

Members of the Pennsylvania Senate
Members of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives

Thank you again for your support of the veterans, Guard members, military spouses, and their families.

WE ARE PNGAS, the Pennsylvania National Guard Associations, the only organization exclusively promoting the highest levels of readiness, modernization and quality of life for our 19,438 members of the Pennsylvania National Guard, their spouses, and families, while making sure our men and women have the very-best equipment, training, and resources. The PNGAS mission helps members, veterans, spouses, and their family's get the benefits they have earned. Over the next 12-months, the Pennsylvania National Guard must recruit more than 2,300 new members to replace Guard members that have completed their commitments and/or retired. As a direct result, PNGAS legislative, budget and mission priorities reflect the critical need to attract, train and retain quality women and men in the Guard and recognize institutions that help optimize recruitment, retention and procurement strategies of the Pennsylvania National Guard.

We are kindly asking members of the Pennsylvania Senate and Pennsylvania House of Representatives to co-sponsor, support, and vote for final passage for SB325 | HB1064.

Pennsylvania is one of just two states that fail to formally recognize Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) in some form.

Because there is no definition for "certified registered nurse anesthetist" under the state's Professional Nursing Law, CRNAs are recognized only as registered nurses (RNs), not as CRNAs. Bipartisan measures have been introduced (and have passed in previous sessions) to formally recognize nurse anesthetists as "CRNAs" under Pennsylvania statute and finally acknowledge CRNAs for their education and training. These professional designation bills are simple, non-controversial title recognition measures.

If you have any questions, concerns or inquiries, we are pleased to meet or speak with you at your earliest convenience at 215.514.5947 or PNGAS@PNGAS.org.

Very truly yours,

Kathleen Fabrizi, Executive Director,
Pennsylvania National Guard Associations (PNGAS)

Chad M. Rettew
Chairman, PNGAS

Challenges that Pennsylvania CRNAs face without title designation:

- **MILITARY SERVICE:** Pennsylvania CRNAs who serve in the military must secure designation in another state to serve as an armed forces anesthesia provider because our commonwealth does not officially recognize CRNAs. That brings logistical and financial challenges. Pennsylvania-based military CRNAs pay more traveling out of state to obtain the CEUs or to meet other legal requirements to stay licensed and credentialed. They also pay more out-of-pocket expenses renewing multiple licenses.
- **CRISIS RESPONSE:** When hurricanes recently hit in the South, for example, Pennsylvania-based CRNAs could not be part of response teams because simply they lacked formal credentials that nearly every other state already recognizes. Pennsylvania's crisis response capabilities are diminished.
- **STUDENT RETENTION:** With 13 nurse anesthetist programs here, Pennsylvania ranks among the top draws nationally for CRNA students. Retention of these advanced professionals should be a priority. Instead, many relocate to states where they can utilize the full scope of their education and training in clinical practices. Even then, without an official CRNA designation, many graduating students wait as long as six months to get credentialed in out-of-state facilities, as state boards must verify that the students meet the requirements necessary to be classified appropriately there.

These situations impact veterans, members of the Pennsylvania National Guard and their families.

The Professional CRNA designation in Pennsylvania is long overdue and would help keep patients safe, ensure access to quality care, and reign in rising health-care costs.

Pennsylvania is one of just two states that fail to recognize CRNAs in some form.

More Information: www.panaforqualitycare.com

Facts about CRNAs in Pennsylvania:

- In Pennsylvania, education and clinical training for nurse anesthetists is extensive and requires national board certification. In total, CRNAs ultimately complete approximately 9,000 clinical hours including their intensive care unit clinical experience, anesthesia clinical training and undergraduate nursing clinical experience before board certification as a CRNA.
- Patient safety data from these states do not differ compared to national statistics. In fact, numerous medical studies show there is no statistical difference in patient outcomes when a nurse anesthetist provides treatment, compared to an anesthesiologist, even for rare and difficult procedures.
- CRNAs are battle-tested providers, with a history that spans to the Civil War. Nurse anesthetists have been the main providers of anesthesia care to U.S. military personnel on the front lines since World War I and remain the primary anesthesia providers in austere combat theaters. In fact, CRNAs most commonly are the only anesthesia providers in the military's forward surgical teams.
- CRNAs remain the primary providers of anesthesia care in rural America, enabling health-care facilities in these medically underserved areas to offer obstetrical, surgical, pain management and trauma stabilization services. Without these advanced practice nurses, facilities would not be able to maintain these services, forcing many rural Americans to travel long distances for such services. In some states, CRNAs are the sole providers in nearly 100 percent of the rural hospitals.
- CRNAs are far less costly for hospitals to employ, so rural hospitals, for example, are able to staff emergency services with in-house CRNAs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week so that every Pennsylvania resident has access to these needed services.

Pennsylvania Nurse Anesthetist Programs

With 13 nurse anesthetist programs here, Pennsylvania ranks among the top draws nationally for CRNA students. The programs include the following:

1. Allegheny Valley Hospital / La Roche College School of Nurse Anesthesia

Biddle Hall | Fort Indiantown Gap | Annville, PA 17003-5002

215.514.5947 | FAX 717-861-5560 | PNGAS@PNGAS.org

www.pngas.org

2. University of Scranton School of Nurse Anesthesia
3. Cedar Crest College Nurse Anesthesia Program
4. Crozer Chester Medical Center / Villanova University Nurse Anesthesia Program
5. Drexel University Nurse Anesthesia Program
6. Excelsior Health School Anesthesia / Saint Vincent College
7. Frank J. Tornetta School of Anesthesia at Montgomery Hospital / La Salle University Nurse Anesthesia Program
8. Geisinger Health System / Bloomsburg University of Pa. Nurse Anesthesia Program
9. Thomas Jefferson University Jefferson School of Nursing Nurse Anesthesia Program
10. University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing Nurse Anesthesia Program
11. University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing Nurse Anesthesia Program
12. UPMC Hamot School of Anesthesia / Gannon University
13. York College of Pa. / WellSpan Health Nurse Anesthetist Program

Contact Information:

Kathleen Fabrizi, Executive Director, PNGAS
Biddle Hall Building, 9-109 Fort Indiantown Gap
Annville, PA 17003-5002
Mobile; 215-514-5947,
Email: PNGAS@PNGAS.org
www.PNGAS.org