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HOUSE MEMORIAL 26

**53RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2017**

INTRODUCED BY

Debra M. Sariñana and Jason C. Harper

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE FEDERAL VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION TO  
RECOGNIZE FULL-PRACTICE AUTHORITY FOR CERTIFIED REGISTERED  
NURSE ANESTHETISTS TO PRACTICE INDEPENDENTLY IN ITS FACILITIES  
ANESTHESIA, DELIVERY FOR SURGERY, LABOR AND DELIVERY, TRAUMA  
STABILIZATION AND CHRONIC PAIN MANAGEMENT.

WHEREAS, certified registered nurse anesthetists are  
highly educated advanced practice registered nurses who hold a  
masters or doctoral degree from an accredited nurse anesthesia  
educational program and must attain a minimum of seven or eight  
years of education, training and experience before becoming  
certified registered nurse anesthetists; and

WHEREAS, certified registered nurse anesthetists deliver  
anesthesia to patients in exactly the same ways, for the same  
types of complex procedures and for the same severity of

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1 conditions, just as safely as physician anesthesiologists; and

2 WHEREAS, certified registered nurse anesthetists work in  
3 every setting in which anesthesia is delivered, including  
4 battlefields, forward surgical teams, hospitals, ambulatory  
5 surgical centers, dental offices, pain clinics and physician  
6 offices; and

7 WHEREAS, certified registered nurse anesthetists provide  
8 such services as pre-anesthesia evaluation, administering  
9 anesthetics, monitoring and interpreting patients' vital signs  
10 and managing patients' care through surgery and in the recovery  
11 room; and

12 WHEREAS, providing acute and chronic pain management  
13 services is within the professional scope of certified  
14 registered nurse anesthetists; and

15 WHEREAS, according to the United States census bureau, one  
16 hundred seventy-two thousand seven hundred seventeen New  
17 Mexicans are veterans; and

18 WHEREAS, there are only sixteen federal veterans health  
19 administration facilities throughout the state, with six  
20 centers in metropolitan areas; and

21 WHEREAS, there are more than eighty-six thousand veterans  
22 living in rural areas who have limited access to necessary  
23 medical services; and

24 WHEREAS, the exclusion of certified registered nurse  
25 anesthetists from full-practice authority could mean that many

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1 veterans will continue to endure dangerously long wait times  
2 for needed health care requiring anesthesia services; and

3 WHEREAS, granting full-practice authority to certified  
4 registered nurse anesthetists in the veterans health  
5 administration would allow certified registered nurse  
6 anesthetists and anesthesiologists to work together as equal  
7 partners; and

8 WHEREAS, allowing existing certified registered nurse  
9 anesthetists in the veterans health administration full-  
10 practice authority would increase patient access to care  
11 without additional funding and would also increase efficiency;  
12 and

13 WHEREAS, granting full-practice authority to all advanced  
14 practice nurses would standardize care and ensure long-term  
15 sustainability in the veterans health administration; and

16 WHEREAS, the American association of nurse anesthetists  
17 has expressed strong concerns about federal legislation that  
18 omits certified registered nurse anesthetists and recognizes  
19 only three of the four advanced practice registered nurse  
20 specialities for full-practice authority in the veterans health  
21 administration; and

22 WHEREAS, granting full-practice authority to certified  
23 registered nurse anesthetists would ensure that the nation's  
24 veterans would have access to essential surgical, emergency,  
25 obstetric and pain management health care services without

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1 needless delays or having to travel long distances for care;

2 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
3 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the veterans  
4 health administration be requested to recognize full-practice  
5 authority for certified registered nurse anesthetists to  
6 practice independently in its facilities anesthesia, delivery  
7 for surgery, labor and delivery, trauma stabilization and  
8 chronic pain management; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
10 transmitted to the under secretary for health of the veterans  
11 health administration, the medical director of the New Mexico  
12 veterans affairs health care system, New Mexico's secretary of  
13 veterans' services and the American association of nurse  
14 anesthetists.