

Opposition to House Bill H5428 – A Threat to Healthcare Access in Rhode Island

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The Honorable Megan Cotter
State Representative, District 39
Rhode Island House of Representatives

The Honorable Susan R. Donovan
Chair, House Health and Human Services Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives

The Honorable Joseph M. McNamara
Primary Sponsor of House Bill H5428
Rhode Island House of Representatives
Dear Representatives Cotter, Donovan, and McNamara,

I strongly oppose House Bill H5428, which unnecessarily restricts Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) and reduces access to procedural care in Rhode Island. This legislation is not about patient safety—it is about workforce control, limiting NP practice, and increasing healthcare costs.

As a primary care NP and President of NPARI, I advocate for NPs across Rhode Island. While I do not personally administer anesthetic medications, I work closely with hospital-based NPs and can confidently attest to their expertise in procedural sedation.

NPs Are Trained and Safe in Procedural Sedation

- NPs undergo extensive education and training in pharmacology, physiology, and patient care.
- NPs consistently provide safe and effective sedation for procedures such as orthopedic injuries, interventional radiology, cardiology, and pain management—roles they have successfully filled in ICUs, cath labs, and emergency departments.
- During the last legislative session, NPs provided evidence of our strong safety record, while the group that introduced this bill could not produce data to justify their opposition.

This Bill Will Harm Patient Access & Overburden the System

- Restricting NP procedural sedation will worsen provider shortages, delaying necessary medical procedures across Rhode Island.
- NPs have consistently filled gaps in primary care, mental health, and rural health services.

Limiting NP autonomy will disproportionately harm patients in medically underserved areas, worsening existing healthcare disparities.

- Demand for sedation services is rising. Blocking NPs will not fix CRNA shortages—it will worsen them, driving up healthcare costs by increasing reliance on CRNAs, the highest-paid APRNs with the same master's degree as NPs.

Workforce Control, Not Safety

- CRNAs supporting this bill profit from third-party staffing firms, which increase healthcare costs.

- CRNAs should focus on deep sedation and general anesthesia rather than limiting NPs from practicing within their proven scope.

- This bill is not about patient safety but about restricting NP practice despite decades of evidence supporting NP-led care.

- NPs are highly trained professionals who undergo rigorous education, clinical training, and certification. Our Licensure, Accreditation, Certification, and Education (LACE) framework ensures that we meet stringent national standards for safe, evidence-based practice.

- Research consistently shows that NPs provide care that is equivalent to, if not better than, that of our physician colleagues, in terms of patient outcomes, safety, and satisfaction.

I urge you to oppose H5428 and protect patient access, workforce sustainability, and healthcare affordability.

Sincerely,

Desirae Heys, DNP, APRN-CNP, FNP-BC

President, Nurse Practitioners Alliance of Rhode Island (NPARI)

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