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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**New York State Association of Nurse Anesthetists Applauds Governor Cuomo for Move to Afford Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists Full Scope of Practice and Privileges**

*Provision would impact more than 1,600 CRNAs statewide and could bring a significant cost savings to the overall health delivery system*

**ALBANY, N.Y.** – Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's Executive Budget Proposal for fiscal year 2018-19 includes a provision to amend the education law, recognizing Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) as Advanced Practice Nurses. This provision could ultimately allow CRNAs to practice to their full scope based on education, training and experience. We look forward to working with the Governor and the Legislature to achieve that goal.

More than 30 years of scientific study has demonstrated that CRNAs administer safe, quality care with patient outcomes equivalent to anesthesiologists, their physician counterparts. This proposal is a step toward New York state adopting long-standing and uniformly accepted standards of care for this advanced nursing specialty. Modeled in part after the Nurse Practitioner Modernization Act of 2014, similar education policy has been enacted in New York for other advanced nursing specialties, including Nurse Practitioners and Clinical Nurse Specialists.

Proposed legislation affording CRNAs full scope of practice has been introduced in the state Legislature for close to 20 years. Assemblymember Richard N. Gottfried has sponsored the legislation in an effort to promote patient safety and well-being by increasing accessibility, dependability and cost effectiveness of anesthesia.

“Granting CRNAs their full scope of practice will increase patient access in the most cost-effective manner while maintaining quality and opening up resources to invest in other operations.” said Assemblymember Gottfried. “There is increasing demand for anesthesia services in New York, especially in rural and under-served areas. We are committed to providing patients in New York state with the best anesthesia care possible.”

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Industry studies demonstrate that increased utilization of CRNAs is estimated to generate an additional \$2 million in revenue annually per average 12-room surgical department. Specifically, this new legislation will authorize CRNAs with more than 3,600 hours of experience to practice in collaboration with a physician without requiring a written practice agreement, as Nurse Practitioners currently practice. CRNAs with this level of experience will be permitted to practice in collaboration with one or more physicians in order to provide more timely, cost-effective treatments to patients receiving anesthetic care.

“We appreciate Governor Cuomo’s decision toward advancing healthcare accessibility and efficiency. We hope that legislators will fight to keep advanced nurses in this state and give this issue thoughtful consideration on behalf of patients receiving anesthetic care, and graduate nursing students considering careers as a CRNA,” said Dr. Cheryl Spulecki, president, New York State Association of Nurse Anesthetists. “We’re confident that given the opportunity to practice within their full scope, CRNAs will be able to contribute to the affordability, efficiency and accessibility of anesthesia services in New York state.”

New York offers three of the top CRNA programs in the United States. Education and experience required to become a CRNA include:

- Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) or other appropriate baccalaureate degree;
- A current license as a registered nurse and at least one year of experience as a registered nurse in an acute care setting;
- Graduation with a minimum of a master's degree (doctoral degree in 2025) from an accredited nurse anesthesia educational program; and
- Passing of the national certification exam following graduation.

In order to be recertified, CRNAs must obtain a minimum of 60 hours of approved continuing education every two years, document substantial anesthesia practice, maintain current state licensure, and certify that they have not developed any conditions that could adversely affect their ability to practice anesthesia. CRNAs must also complete and pass a recertification exam, assuring they are up to date on the most recent practice trends and evidence-based research.

Currently under these educational and experience standards, CRNAs in New York are only authorized to practice under their Registered Nurse (RN) license. In contrast, the majority of states grant CRNAs with these qualifications the opportunity to operate within their full scope of practice. In every state, CRNAs are the sole providers in nearly every rural hospital.

“As CRNAs, our highest priority is the health and well-being of our patients,” said John Polechetti, MS LCDR USNR (ret.) CRNA. “We are confident that given the opportunity to act according to our full scope as Advanced Practice Nurses, patients will have better access to anesthetic care.”

Each year, anesthesia professionals safely administer more than 33 million anesthetics to patients across the United States. Affording CRNAs full scope of practice will ensure a more robust provider network of anesthesia professionals and improve patient access to more efficient, cost-effective care without sacrificing quality.

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***About New York State Association of Nurse Anesthetists (NYSANA):***

***NYSANA is the statewide professional association representing the interests of over 1,600 Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists and Student Registered Nurse Anesthetists providing high quality, safe and cost-effective anesthesia care to residents across of New York State in every setting anesthesia services are provided.***

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