



# MISSISSIPPI ASSOCIATION OF NURSE ANESTHETISTS, INC.

February 4, 2016

Dear Colleague:

As we remind ourselves daily in our practices, patient safety, quality of care and access to services are the watchwords of our profession. And as the legal environment within which we operate reminds us regularly, the focus on patient safety, quality of care and access to services sometimes seems lost in the fog of ever-changing rules, regulations and requirements.

Quality healthcare delivery requires collaboration among all members of the bedside team. Every day, we collaborate with other healthcare professionals to ensure that every aspect of patient care is handled by precisely the best combination of skills and experience.

Artificial regulatory requirements that propose to limit or restrict the manner in which healthcare deliverers may collaborate remove the exercise of professional judgment from the bedside and place it in a conference room. We do not believe such an environment fosters the focus on patient safety, quality of care and access to services to which the people of Mississippi are entitled and to which we have devoted our professional lives.

In the 2016 Session of the Mississippi Legislature, bills are being introduced in both the Senate and the House of Representatives to address the imposition of artificial or arbitrary regulatory requirements on professional collaboration in the healthcare community. Senator Terry Burton and Representative Jeff Smith are both introducing legislation that will have the effect of moving the exercise of collaborative professional judgment in patient care back where it belongs – to the bedside or other clinical setting where patients are being treated, rather than in conference rooms or board rooms.

The legislation will also have the effect of placing advanced practice nurses on equal footing as to prescriptive authority, and will remove unnecessary regulatory burdens that have nothing to do with patient safety or quality of and access to care, and which, sometimes, even undermine those goals.

Once the bill numbers for the Senate and House legislation are available, we will get that information to you immediately. In the meantime, it will be important that all nursing professionals in our state work together to encourage support of this legislation, which we are calling the "Patient Access to Care Act," by their local members of the Senate and House.

Would you please contact your local legislators today, and ask for their support? Your contact really can make a difference for professional healthcare delivery for your patients in the coming years.

Very best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sweathers".

George "Sandy" Weathers