The Florida surgical assistant and surgical technologist legislation, SB 360 by Senator Rene Garcia and HB 281 by Representative Matt Gaetz, have been officially introduced and assigned first to the Senate Health Policy Committee and the House Health Quality Subcommittee!

Florida surgical technologists and surgical assistants who live in targeted legislative districts have been contacted and asked to call their legislators to express their support and ask this legislation be scheduled for a vote ASAP.

This legislation, being promoted by the Florida State Assembly of the Association of Surgical Technologists (FL-AST), the Association of Surgical Technologists (AST) and the Association of Surgical Assistants (ASA) would only allow health care facilities to employ or contract with surgical technologists and surgical assistants who hold valid CST certification for surgical technologists or valid CSFA, SA-C or CSA certification for surgical assistants. Reimbursement parity for surgical assistants is also included in the legislation.

Senate Bill 360 and House Bill 281 also provide for education and certification for newly-practicing surgical technologists, grandfathers certain surgical assistants and also allows military-trained surgical assistants and other licensed health professionals to practice as surgical assistants.

Florida surgical technologists and surgical assistants who belong to AST or ASA who live in the legislative districts of Representative Corcoran, Senator Thrasher, and Senate Health Policy and House Health Quality Subcommittee legislators, especially the Chairman of these committees: Senator Aaron Bean and Representative Ken Roberson, have been contacted via email and asked to call their legislators in support of this legislation. These legislators are very important because they will be deciding whether or not our legislation gets scheduled for a vote in a tight calendar. In previous years, our legislation has failed only because we ran out of time.

If you live in one of these districts, please CALL your senator and/or representative or his or her legislative aide to express your support for Senate Bill 360 and House Bill 281. To find your legislative officials use this link.

These legislators need to hear from surgical technologists and surgical assistant members who live or work in their districts in support of this legislation, so it is very important that you call.

We need to get this legislation scheduled for committee votes by March 15th! Please call your legislators by March 1st asking when it will be scheduled for a vote.

It’s easy and only takes a few minutes. Instructions are included below. Please take a few minutes and make the call! Do not email without a phone call; emails are too easy for legislators to ignore. If you want, you can email, but then be sure to call to follow-up. Aeger Primo! The Patient First!

HOW TO CALL your representative or senator or their legislative aide (continued on next page)
1. Decide when you will call. Mark your calendar or resolve to call within the next 24 hours. You do not have to be an expert to call. All that matters is that your voice is counted. **The legislative staff literally counts and tallies how many people call in support (or opposition) for each issue.**

2. Find your representative using [this link](#).

3. Rehearse the script for the call for 60 seconds, using the script below.

4. Pick-up the phone and dial their district or home office phone number.

5. Ask for your representative or senator. If he or she is not available, ask to speak to a legislative aide. **You will most likely speak to a legislative aide.** Be respectful. Legislative aides have the ear of the legislators for whom they work.

6. Ask who you are speaking with and write it down so you can report back to FL-AST and FL ASA leadership.

7. Follow this basic script- it is fine if you are short and sweet!

   - *My name is (state your name)*
   - *I live in (state your city) in your district and I am a constituent of (state your legislator’s name)*.
   - *I am a surgical technologist (or surgical assistant) at (tell them the name of your facility)*
   - *I am calling to express my support for Senate Bill 360 by Senator Rene Garcia and House Bill 281 by Representative Gaetz (pronounced "Gates").*  
   - *This legislation promotes surgical patient safety by promoting certification for newly-practicing surgical technologist and surgical assistants.*
   - **I would like to know when [state your representatives name] is scheduling this legislation for a vote.**
   - *I'm calling to request that he (or she) schedule this surgical patient safety legislation for a vote as soon as possible.*
   - *Give them your email address or phone number so they can get back to you about when the legislation is being scheduled for a vote.*
   - *Ask them to get back to you to let you know when it will be scheduled for a vote.*
   - *Thank them for your time.*

If you can’t reach them at one office, try the other office. Don't forget, your legislators work for you!

The legislative staffer probably will not have questions, but if they have questions you do not know the answer to, that’s okay! Just tell them you will get back to them and contact [governmentaffairs@ast.org](mailto:governmentaffairs@ast.org) or [lmcnaron@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:lmcnaron@gulfcoast.edu) to get the answers to the question(s).

When you have made the call, please inform your FL-AST or FL ASA leader or AST/ASA staff at [governmentaffairs@ast.org](mailto:governmentaffairs@ast.org). This step is VERY important: if the legislator later tries to say that he has not heard from constituents, we can inform them that he actually has heard from constituents.

**PLEASE CALL BY MARCH 1ST! Aeger Primo! The Patient First!**