

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5877

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Health & Long-Term Care, March 1, 1999

**Title:** An act relating to the registration of surgical technologists.

**Brief Description:** Providing for the registration of surgical technologists.

**Sponsors:** Senators Thibaudeau, Johnson and Winsley.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 2/24/99, 3/1/99 [DPS-WM].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5877 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Thibaudeau, Chair; Wojahn, Vice Chair; Costa, Deccio, Franklin, Johnson and Winsley.

**Staff:** Joan K. Mell (786-7447)

**Background:** Surgical technologists assist surgeons in the surgical setting by preserving a sterile surgical environment and in handing instruments to the surgeon.

Pursuant to recommendations from a 1996 sunrise review, the Department of Health convened a workgroup to discuss surgical assisting services. The workgroup concluded that all individuals functioning in surgical assist roles with the exception of surgical technologists were already regulated; therefore, the State Board of Health and the Department of Health support regulation of surgical technologists to bring them under the authority of the Uniform Disciplinary Act.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** Anyone who uses the title surgical technologist or performs surgical technology must register with the Department of Health. Registration brings them within the Uniform Disciplinary Act. The Department of Health is given rulemaking authority. Exceptions to registration exist for surgical technologists in an educational setting and in the military.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** A definition of surgical technology is added.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 21, 1999.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** Registration of surgical technologists is in the best interest of public health. Nurses hesitate supporting expansion of the surgical technologists role in the operating room. A definition is needed.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Jan Olmstead, Davor Gjurasic, Leann Witchel, STOWS; C.J. Welter, Roger Ozbirn, AORN; Patty Hayes, DOH.