

Fellow Coloradans;

June 30th will mark my last day as your Society President. It has been a busy two years with many issues of importance and special significance at both the state and national level. It has been a privilege and my honor to serve you, the members of this Society, in this position and to further our mission of education and professional advocacy. Filling the shoes of our previous President, Dr. Murray Willis, has been a daunting task. But, I am confident that our soon-to-be President Dr. Joy Hawkins will put her international reputation as a leading clinician, educator, and scientist to good use and represent our interests to the utmost.

This past year we have had some legislative successes at the state level which include the tabling of the proposed "Surprise Billing" law which threatened to use Medicare rates as a benchmark for payment of anesthesia services when using out-of-network physician services, support of legislation to combat the opioid epidemic and the positioning of physician anesthesiologists as experts to consult with state agencies, changing the Medicaid Compliance bill to mitigate and lessen the draconian penalties that were initially proposed for billing mistakes, removing unwarranted scope of practice expansion for APRNs from a bill the purpose of which was to allow school nurses to give OTC medications to students with parental consent, modifying the Transparency of Direct Pay Health Prices bill to exclude hospital-based physicians, and engaging the legislature to push the Colorado Health Care Policy and Finance Administration (HCPF) for transparency and full implementation of the 2015 targeted increase in anesthesia conversion factors under Medicaid. On the regulatory front, we had a successful interaction with the Colorado Attorney General's office regarding its mischaracterization of Medicaid billing issues as "Medicaid fraud" and have started the periodic review of how the state Medicaid agency defines "covered benefits" for anesthesia services.

Of course, I am sure everyone remembers the big push by the Veterans Administration to allow so-called "full practice authority" of APRNs including nurse anesthetists within the VA regardless of state laws. Some of these issues required direct testimony by physician anesthesiologists to legislative committees, but all needed the full service of our professional lobbyist. If any of you held any doubts about the need for our profession to be engaged in the political process, the activities noted above should dispel them.

One thing that I think is important to state at this time is the need for motivated individuals to serve as officers of this Society. Many people may hold the mistaken belief that these positions are Denver- or University-centric. I encourage anyone who has the interest in our activities to nominate themselves or ask a colleague to nominate them for an office in the CSA. The work is rewarding and I really want to see more representation of members from parts of Colorado outside Denver. While it is true that Denver contains the highest concentration of anesthesiologists, and that people at University seek these positions as a stepping stone to promotion within the academic ranks, I am confident that there are many talented doctors in Pueblo, Grand Junction, Montrose, Colorado Springs, and everywhere who can successfully hold office. The vast majority of the work of the executive board of officers is done through the miracle of modern teleconferencing. GO FOR IT! Get your group to act as a voting block to vote you into the President's seat! Our society will be better for it; believe me.

Before I leave this post, I want to again emphasize the need for everyone to be not just involved but committed to advocacy of our profession at both the state and national level. While not all of us have the time or inclination to directly lobby legislators, we can all assure these efforts continue by giving a

small bit of our treasure to the state PAC (Committee for Physician Anesthesia Care), the CSA Small Donor Fund, and the ASAPAC. This provides the tools needed by those who can give personal time and our professional lobbyists (both state and federal) to get our message of patient safety, professionalism, and the highest level of care directly to the legislators who can so profoundly through regulation affect our ability to provide care or devalue our training and education.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your President. Thank you to the officers of the Society who helped me through these last two years – I could not have done it without them. A special thank you to Carol Goddard our Executive Director, and to Edie Busam our professional lobbyist. Many, many thanks to the society members who provided expert testimony to the state legislature on topics of importance to our patients and us when needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan J. Janik". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dan" and last name "Janik" clearly distinguishable.

Daniel J. Janik, MD