December 11, 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

As Executive Director of the New Mexico Board of Nursing, I have been asked to convey the Board’s continued support for the opt-out from the federal requirement for physician supervision of CRNAs. The Board would attest to the continuing benefits since our state obtained this opt-out on November 1, 2002.

Some of the benefits for our state include improved clarity and consistency between state and federal law, as well as the alleviation of confusion concerning the respective roles of nurse anesthetists and surgeons. Other positive outcomes have been seen in that surgeons, nurse anesthetists and hospital administrators no longer have to unnecessarily worry about what constitutes “supervision”, lessening the confusion that previously existed. It appears that surgeons are more receptive to working with nurse anesthetists without the unnecessary fear of liability that the federal supervision requirement created.

Lastly, there have been no reports of harmful effects concerning patient care since the opt-out occurred, and, according to the New Mexico Association of Nurse Anesthetists, there has been improved patient access in the rural care arena.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Allison Kozeliski, RN
Executive Director