



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John A. DeFrancisco

## Governor Signs Bill to Extend Mandatory Permit Process for Perfusionists

JOHN A. DEFRANCISCO | October 25, 2013

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State Senator John A. DeFrancisco announced that Governor Andrew Cuomo has signed his bill (S.5353A) into law that will improve patient safety statewide.

Last year, a new state law authorized a temporary permit process for perfusionists to operate specialized medical equipment for the support of patients receiving cardiac surgery. S.5353A will extend that authorization until 2016, at which time, perfusionists can apply for a license with New York state and be required to meet stringent educational standards. A permit holder is subject to the full disciplinary and regulatory authority of the Board of Regents and the State Education Department.

“Perfusionists are operating room specialists who pump oxygen and blood to patients through the use of a heart-lung machine, said Senator DeFrancisco. “They are often faced with a life or death situation.”

Professor Bruce Searles with Upstate Medical University added, “We want to thank Senator DeFrancisco for his work to help protect cardiac surgery patients in New York State. This new law represents a huge advancement for our profession and assures that only professionals with specialized education and experience will operate these highly sophisticated machines.”

“Nearly 25 percent of perfusionists currently working in New York State do not have the appropriate credentials,” concluded Senator DeFrancisco. “We need to increase patient safety by enforcing higher professional standards and accountability.”

The act will take effect in 2016, creating a transitional period so that medical facilities do not face a sudden shortage of perfusionists after licensure is enacted.

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