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Good Morning. Thank you for inviting me to be here today, as you consider the Nurse Licensure Compact. I am especially happy to be here on the two hundredth anniversary of the birthday of Florence Nightingale, a brilliant nurse who taught the medical community about the necessity of a healthy environment to the health and welfare of an individual human or a community of humans. And 2020 is the International Year of the Nurse and Nurse Midwife. Additionally, we are living in the age of a pandemic. **Now is the time** for borders to disappear and for health care providers to be able to go to the places where they are needed, easily and expeditiously.

It seems to me that in light of an anniversary of the "mother of modern nursing", a commemoration for nurses all over the world making a difference in the health and welfare of their fellow citizens and a global pandemic that is challenging all of us to do more, to be more and "conquer the beast", as New York Governor Andrew Cuomo said, it is time for the Nurse Licensure Compact to be embraced and made the law of the land all over the United States.

The NLC is a modern solution, meant to solve some of the problems that many communities are facing due to a shortage of nurses available to care for people. After all, someone may end up in the hospital due to an illness or an accident or a surgery or even a corona virus pandemic. But people stay in the hospital because they are in need of nursing care. This demands qualified and competent nurses able to do the work where the work is needed.

The Nurse Licensure Compact increases access to care while maintaining public protection at the state level. Under the Nurse Licensure Compact, registered nurses and licensed practical nurses can practice in any Compact state, without having to obtain individual state licenses. The Vermont Board of Nursing made a unanimous decision several years ago to move ahead with the Compact. The Nurse Licensure Compact became effective on July 20, 2017 and was implemented on January 19, 2018.

Currently, there are 35 states that have become Compact States. Some of the benefits of being a Compact State are:

- RNs and LPNs with a Compact multi-state license can practice in-person or provide telenursing services to patients located in any compact state without having to obtain additional licenses.

- Nurses with a Compact license can easily cross state borders to other Compact states and provide vital services when needed during epidemics, pandemics and other disasters.
- The Compact offers better access to telehealth, telenursing and continuing nursing education. The ability to move from one Compact State to another or to call patients in another jurisdiction is easier and there are fewer delays in providing needed services.
- The high cost to nurses and their employers when they have to apply for individual state licenses is eliminated. The Compact makes practicing across state borders more affordable and convenient.

The Nurse Licensure Compact is administered by an NLC Commission made up of a representative from each Compact state that guides and directs the administrative duties for the NLC, any rule making and rule changes for the Compact. Every member of the Compact is a State Board of Nursing with the same overarching goal as the Board of Nursing in Vermont – we all seek to provide public protection to the citizens of our jurisdictions and to ensure that all Nursing Assistants, Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses and Advance Practice Registered Nurses are safe and competent to practice. This Compact does not cover APRN practice. There is a separate Compact for APRNs.

In the Compact, nurses are licensed in the state in which they reside. If they move to another state, they must change their home state license. There is a set of Uniform Licensure Requirements for obtaining and renewing a Compact license. If a Nurse does not meet all of the requirements for a Compact license, he or she may remain eligible for a single state license in their home state. I do hope you will act favorably on this issue. Thank you.