

Good Morning. Thank you for allowing me to be here today to provide testimony on the Nurse Licensure Compact. I am a Family Nurse Practitioner and have been an LPN and an RN previously. I have enjoyed serving on the Board of Nursing for eight years and have been vice chair of the Board as well as Chair currently. I teach future Nurse Practitioners at UVM and see patients at Appletree Bay Primary Care. It is a Primary Care practice that was started by Nurse Practitioners in 2014. We do employ one physician, due to a few Medicare requirements that an MD sign off on certain orders.

The Compact is a modern solution to some of the problems associated with inadequate numbers of nurses around the country. The Compact increases access to nursing, care while maintaining public protection at the state level. Under the Nurse Licensure Compact, registered nurses and licensed practical nurses can practice in other Compact states, without having to obtain individual state licenses. The Board of Nursing in Vermont unanimously voted to move ahead with joining the Compact several years ago and I am pleased that you are considering the idea this year. The Nurse Licensure Compact became effective on July 20, 2017 and was then implemented on January 19, 2018.

Currently, there are 34 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 work in other Compact states and provide vital services when needed during epidemics 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 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 has an NLC Commission, made up of a representative from each Compact state that guides and directs the rule making process and any rule changes for the Compact. Every single 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 state 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. If a nurse has a complaint made against them, the home state will generally handle the disciplinary process for the nurse. The Compact has a set of Uniform Licensure requirements for obtaining a Compact license. If a Nurse does not meet all of the requirements, he or she will remain eligible for a single state license. One of the requirements for being in the Compact is that nurses need to have had a biometric background check completed. Our Board also voted to proceed with criminal background checks a few years ago, but there have been some obstacles to putting that in effect.