

SB 179: ALASKA NURSE LICENSURE COMPACT

- **34 states have joined the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC):** Indiana and Alabama will implement the NLC in 2020. Bills to enact the NLC are currently pending in Massachusetts, Michigan, and Pennsylvania with several others expected in the 2020 session.
- **The NLC is widely supported in Alaska:** The Nurse Licensure Compact is supported by Alaskan nurses, ASHNHA, Department of Defense, Fresenius Medical Care, AARP, and many more.
- **Nurses support the NLC:** According to a 2019 survey of Alaska-licensed nurses, 92% supported joining the Compact (including 87% of Alaska-licensed nurses who are members of a union).
- **NLC would help address the RN workforce shortage**, both short- and long-term:
 - Alaska hospitals currently have over **670** nursing vacancies.
 - According to Department of Workforce and Labor Development and HRSA federal data, **close to 50% of all Alaskan-licensed RNs are over the age of 45**, and there is a **22.7% difference between nurse supply and demand**. **By 2030, Alaska is expected to need 5,400 additional nurses**.
 - A three-year report from the Alaska Commission on Aging states Alaska has the **fastest-growing senior population in the nation**.
- **The NLC saves money:** Nursing shortages increase overall health costs by decreasing patient access to care—inflating insurance premiums and patient healthcare costs.
- **Increases flexibility of healthcare emergency preparedness infrastructure:** The Compact allows nurses to quickly and easily provide nursing services in response to disasters such as flu pandemics, natural disasters such as earthquakes and mass casualty events, etc.
- **Critical tool in supporting healthcare innovation and rural critical access healthcare:** As telemedicine is increasingly being used to provide care, the ability for nurses to provide care across state lines is becoming even more important. Nursing practice takes place where the patient is located— the NLC allows for Alaska nurses to provide telemedicine care in all other Compact states, and allows nurse educators from Alaska to teach online courses to nursing students in other states.
- **States maintain autonomy:** Importantly, the Compact allows states to maintain their own autonomy over licensure. The NLC does not alter the licensure requirements to obtain an Alaska license nor the scope of practice in the state.
- **Ensures safe providers-** Nurses with state or federal felony convictions are ineligible for multistate licensure. Nurses currently participating in alternative to discipline programs also cannot participate in the Compact.

According to the 2019 survey conducted by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN):

92% of Alaska's Nurses Support Joining the NLC