

Chair(s) and Members of the Alaska Legislature,

On behalf of the Alaska Academy of Physician Associates (AKAPA), thank you for your continued leadership in strengthening Alaska's healthcare system—particularly as you consider policy strategies that expand workforce capacity, improve care access, and address the unique challenges faced by rural and underserved communities.



We write today in *strong support* of legislation enabling Alaska to join the Physician Assistant (PA) Licensure Compact.

PAs are a cornerstone of Alaska's healthcare delivery system. Across the state—and especially in rural and remote communities—PAs often serve as the sole medical provider in primary care clinics, village health centers, and critical access hospitals. Enabling PAs to practice where they are most needed is not only essential for patient care—it is essential for the stability and resilience of rural health systems.

Joining the PA Licensure Compact would:

- Improve PA mobility, allowing qualified PAs from compact states to more quickly enter Alaska's workforce to fill urgent vacancies.
- Expand access in high-need areas, reducing care delays and supporting continuity of services in communities already experiencing significant clinician shortages.
- Strengthen public protection, as the Compact requires primary-source verification, continued monitoring, and real-time information exchange among member states.

States' technical scores for Rural Health Transformation Project (RHTP) "Workload Funding" will be recalculated before each year's distribution. Importantly, participation in the PA Licensure Compact carries measurable scoring value—worth 0 points for no action, 50 points for legislation filed, and 100 points for becoming a full compact member. By joining the Compact, Alaska would position itself to capture significantly higher RHTP funding in future budget periods—unlocking additional federal dollars.

This is a rare opportunity: Alaska can simultaneously strengthen its workforce, advance rural access to care, and increase its federal funding potential—simply by adopting a compact that dozens of other states are already successfully implementing.

Alaska has already committed—within its RHTP application—to joining all licensure compacts relevant to the healthcare workforce. Legislating the PA Licensure Compact, along with modernizing PA practice statutes, fulfills that commitment and strengthens Alaska's position as a national leader in rural health transformation.

For these reasons, AKAPA urges the Legislature to support the PA Compact legislation.

We stand ready to serve as a resource to lawmakers by providing technical assistance, subject-matter expertise, model language, and rural practice insights. Thank you for your commitment to building a stronger, more accessible healthcare system for every Alaskan.

Sincerely,

*The Board of the Alaska Academy of Physician Associates (AKAPA)*