



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Commerce, Community,
and Economic Development

BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY AND
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

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April 18, 2025

The Honorable Zack Fields
Co-Chair, House Labor and Commerce
Alaska State Capitol, Room 24
Juneau, Alaska 99801

The Honorable Carolyn Hall
Co-Chair House Labor and Commerce
Alaska State Capitol, Room 434
Juneau, Alaska 99801

The Honorable Jesse Bjorkman
Chair, Senate Labor and Commerce
Alaska State Capitol, Room 427
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: HB 173/ SB 172 – Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact

Dear Chairs Fields, Hall, Bjorkman and Committee Members,

The Alaska State Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board unanimously supports HB 173 and SB172; both acts relating to an interstate occupational therapy licensure compact. Its success in moving through legislation to law this session is paramount in meeting the challenges of ever-growing shortages of occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants throughout all areas of Alaska.

Thirty-two states have enacted legislative to be part of the Occupational Therapy Compact. Eight more states, in addition to Alaska, have introduced legislation to join the OT Compact. The OT Compact is anticipated to begin issuing privileges to practice mid-2025 (June-August).

The Board's decision of support is based on evidence including presentations and supportive testimony from key stakeholders.

Benefits of OT Compact Licensure includes:

- Improving interstate access to occupational therapy care for all Alaskans

- Reducing administrative burdens for full licensure expediting licensure for healthcare providers
- Vetting of all licensees applying for compact privileges or permanent licensure through stringent background checks
- Recruiting and retaining competent healthcare providers to fill critical shortages

Please feel free to reach out to the licensing board if you have any questions regarding the occupational therapy compact or licensing.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

Valerie Phelps

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Valerie Phelps, PT, ScD

Chair, Board of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy