

Jody Simpson

From: Brent Oesterritter <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, April 13, 2021 12:14 PM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: SB67 Nursing Compact Support

Just wanted to send a message in support of SB67 from my crew out here in Nome, Alaska. We have a tough time finding nurses and this compact could ease the burden on our hospital and community. One of the first questions asked when we are hiring temp or permanent staff is whether we are in a compact. It has become common in many areas and everyone I speak with is excited for the change here too.

Regards,
Brent Oesterritter
ED Manager
Norton Sound Health Corporation
Nome, AK 99762

Jody Simpson

From: Lynn Van Vactor [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 13, 2021 10:54 AM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Cc: Connie Beemer
Subject: SB 67 Support
Attachments: ASHNHA SB 67 Nurse Licensure letter of support.pdf

Dear Honorable David Wilson, Chair and Members of the Senate Health and Social Services Committee,

I'm writing today to express my full support of Alaska Joining the Nurse Licensing Compact. As the Director of Quality and Performance Improvement for the Alaska State Hospital Association, I see the need for qualified nursing staff on a daily basis. As well, from the many nurses I work with everyday, the overwhelming support for NLC.

We request your full support of Alaska joining the Nurse Licensing Compact (NLC).

NLC improves access to care by making it easier for nurses to start working, providing patient care right away, rather than sitting on the sidelines for weeks, waiting for official approval. Timely filling of nursing vacancies is imperative to ensure continuity of care and safe staffing levels for our patients. The compact has high standards with uniform requirements ensuring comparable qualifications.

Currently, at much time and expense, Alaska nurses are required to have multiple licenses to be able to provide training and patient care across state lines. My colleague has to have 5 licenses to maintain her teaching position. In addition, with the advance of telehealth, such licensing burdens are a regulatory nightmare.

Alaska needs to be competitive to attract professional nursing staff. Travel nurses who want to stay and work in Alaska often refuse to accept permanent vacant positions, even though they would like to stay, because Alaska does not offer a NLC license. NLC nurses who change their residency to Alaska eventually lose their NLC status. I was saddened to hear that one of our rural hospitals had a nursing position left vacant, even though the nurse leaving the position loved Alaska and wanted to stay. She did not accept the position because she did not want to lose her NLC status.

We have heard that NLC will allow out of state nurses to take jobs away from Alaska Nurses. While ASHNHA does not keep track of nursing vacancies, nursing shortages exist with our members and obtaining qualified help through NLC would add more HR tool to the tool box, a much needed resource for our hospitals.

Thank you for considering this very important issue to nurses and patients in your district.

As well, attached is the letter of support from ASHNHA CEO, Jared Kosin.

Sincerely, Lynn Van Vactor

Lynn Van Vactor, CPHQ

Director, Quality & Performance Improvement
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ALASKA STATE HOSPITAL AND
NURSING HOME ASSOCIATION



ALASKA STATE HOSPITAL &
NURSING HOME ASSOCIATION

February 19, 2021

Senator David Wilson
Senate Health and Social Services Committee
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: SB 67 Nurse Licensure Compact

Dear Senator Wilson and members of the Senate HSS Committee,

The Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association (ASHNHA) is a membership organization representing Alaska's hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies and other health care providers. ASHNHA is pleased to write this letter in support of SB 67, an Act relating to the licensure of nursing professionals, multistate nurse licensure compact.

ASHNHA strongly supports Alaska joining the multi-state nurse licensure compact (NLC) to reduce barriers to licensure, expand workforce opportunities, address nursing workforce shortages, and improve patient care. Alaska 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.

The NLC is an effective tool for recruiting and retention efforts, and a critical resource during times of public health emergency or natural disasters by allowing a nurse to easily cross statelines to help those in need. The NLC helps military spouses who are burdened with applying for a new nursing license each time the family must relocate. Alaska's participation in the compact will increase the ability to hire and deploy qualified nurses in a timely manner, as well expand the economic opportunity for Alaska nurses by allowing them to provide educational services and training to nurses in other compact states. Nurses within compact states tend to migrate to other states covered by their license, participating in the compact offers strategic access to a much-needed workforce resource.

Alaska faces a high vacancy rate for nurses across the state and needs to be competitive to attract professional nursing staff. Filling staff vacancies is imperative to ensure continuity of care and support for patients. The compact has high standards with uniform requirements for a multistate license to ensure that nurses from NLC states meet strict qualifications. In addition to the licensing process, Alaska hospitals and nursing homes are invested in patient safety by having stringent onboarding processes, internal standards and competencies that must be met before work can begin.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

Jared Kosin, JD, MBA
President & CEO

Jody Simpson

From: Opsut Jennifer <Jennifer.Opsut@hcahealthcare.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 14, 2021 8:02 AM
To: Sen. David Wilson; Senate Health and Social Services
Cc: Martin Monique
Subject: Support Letter for SB67 - Nurse Licensure Compact
Attachments: Alaska Regional Hospital Supports SB67 Nurse Licensure Compact.pdf

Senator Wilson,

Please accept the attached letter of support for SB67, legislation which would allow the State of Alaska to join the Nurse Licensure Compact.

As you may recall, we spoke on a patient issue in December. At that time, I was serving as the Interim CEO after Julie Taylor accepted a position at another HCA hospital in Las Vegas. I am pleased to say I accepted the role of CEO at Alaska Regional Hospital effective March 8. I served as the Chief Operating Officer at Alaska Regional for the past three years. Prior to joining the team here, I served as the COO at West Valley Medical Center, a sister HCA facility in Caldwell, Idaho.

If I can provide additional information on the nurse licensure compact, please do not hesitate to contact me via email or on my cell phone at 208-249-9145. If there are other health care related issues before the Legislature or matters specific to Alaska Regional Hospital that I can provide information or assistance, I am happy to be a resource. Please also feel free to contact Monique Martin, Director of Government Relations, as another source of information. Monique can be reached at Monique.martin@hcahealthcare.com or 907-444-8808.

Thank you for consideration of this important legislation.

Jennifer

Jennifer Opsut
Chief Executive Officer
Administration
O: 907.264.1755


Jody Simpson

From: Tammy Mercer [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 14, 2021 8:55 AM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Cc: Maroney, Lisa K (CED)
Subject: Support of SB 67 Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC)

Greetings,

I am writing with intent to voice an opinion that supports the Senate Bill 67; and here is why. I am a Registered Nurse who has been practicing for 28 years. I recently applied for a temporary Nursing license to practice here in Alaska. My husband and I moved here, initially to be present during my mother's end of life process. I was hired in October, 2020 and moved to Wasilla in November to practice Nursing.

The process was cumbersome. My experience is that validation of my prior licensure and practice, under the California Board of Nursing, took several months to release the required information coupled with the annual renewal for current practicing Nurses in Alaska also occurring in November.

Now that we are planning to stay in Alaska, I am still having to work out the transition from temporary to permanent status. Because I also have an endorsement to practice in Arizona, a state with NLC designation, Alaska Nursing Board was able to validate my license through the Arizona Nursing Board in only a few days, bypassing the California red tape for temporary license processing.

It is my understanding that the NLC designation gives freedom to the practitioner as well as the governing bodies to best oversee the practicing professional.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Respectfully,

Tammy Mercer, BSN, RN, PHN-BC
189 E. Nelson Ave, #203
Wasilla, AK 99654
[REDACTED]