

The Honorable Jesse Sumner

Chairman of House Labor and Commerce

120 Fourth St., Rm 3 State Capitol

Juneau, AK 99801-1182

April 10th, 2023

The Honorable Jesse Sumner:

I am writing to you in opposition to HB 149, Multi-State Licensure Compact. I have worked as a nurse in this State for over 15 years, both in the hospital and in the community, and a compact license will not solve our nurse shortage issues, in essence if enacted will create a floodgate for current and existing nurse to leave our state thereby increasing our nurse openings exponentially. I am a proud Alaskan nurse who loves this state and the people in it and will continue to provide quality care for my patients but not at the risk of losing my sovereignty or my ability to know who is collaborating with me. A compact license is run by a third party company who does not have the interests of nurses or the communities we serve at the forefront of their standards but more focused on a financial bottom line and rules that will suffocate are nursing autonomy. I look to our legislation to work with the people of this great state to find other avenues to increase our nursing numbers without taking away our capacity for independence and high standards that we utilize everyday with our patients. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Shannon j. Davenport, BSN, MSN

From: Julie Cottrell <jujubelle36@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, April 12, 2023 9:44 PM

To: House Labor and Commerce <House.Labor.And.Commerce@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jesse Sumner <Rep.Jesse.Sumner@akleg.gov>; Rep. Justin Ruffridge <Rep.Justin.Ruffridge@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mike Prax <Rep.Mike.Prax@akleg.gov>; Rep. Dan Saddler <Rep.Dan.Saddler@akleg.gov>; Rep. Stanley Wright <Rep.Stanley.Wright@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ashley Carrick <Rep.Ashley.Carrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Zack Fields <Rep.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov>

Subject: HB 149

Dear Members of the House Labor & Commerce Committee,

I have been a Registered Nurse for 22 years and I have held 19 state licenses and they were all easy to obtain until I moved to Alaska, I had to prove that I had 320 nursing hours of employment in the past 5 years that had to be validated by an employer. This stopped me from obtaining my nursing license until I decided to return to travel nursing. After I worked 320 hours and those hours could be validated by my employer, I could not obtain an Alaska RN license by endorsement. This is the only state that holds this high standard. I do not want to lose that. We have exceptional nurses that all have valid transcripts, degrees, and have passed the NCLEX on the first or second attempt. We do not have any of the 7600 illegal nurses that riddles the lower 48. Those fake nurses could not make it past our Board of Nursing standards. The Alaska Board of Nursing validates everyone under intense scrutiny. We need more nurses, yes we do, but what we really need are safe staffing ratios in every facility so that the nurses in Alaska that have left the bedside to take travel jobs, work from home jobs or just left the industry due to burnout or fear. Those are the issues that need to change, change those standards. If we allow you to pass the NLC in Alaska, we are opening up our people to careless, potentially reckless nurses that do not meet the current Alaska Board of nursing standards. We need to protect our people. We deserve capable, knowledgeable, safe practicing nurses that understand the Alaska people and the health issues that plague all Alaskans, especially the Native Alaskans. By passing the NLC, you are forcing the Alaska nurses to accept higher licensing fees, litigation fees that will come when a NLC nurse makes a mistake. Our Board of Nursing litigation team will bear the burden of costs of litigation of nurses that have no ownership to Alaska, no real heart for the people of Alaska. Not all Alaska nurses want the NLC. Nurses that love and live in Alaska do not want to leave our state to travel. We are invested into our state, our people, our culture and our way of life. Make all Alaska state facilities to mandate safe staffing ratios. This has been an issue that has been ignored for far too long. The medical industry states that safe staffing ratios are impossible to mandate and govern. In truth, it is an increase of cost initially to initiate and put in place but the long term benefits are far more profitable for Alaska and the Alaskan medical community. I am asking you as law makers and final decision makers of our laws, do not pass the NLC for Alaska. We as nurses deserve your word that you will keep our people safe and protect our nurses. We know that once you pass the NLC, we will never be able to vote the NLC out of existence. I am rallying my nursing community to fight against this medical injustice. If you think physicians are in agreement with you, a grave mistake has been made. The majority of physicians are with us and they support us. We are the life line in medicine. Without nurses our medical community will collapse overnight. The government has never listened to nurses, mainly female nurses. There is a saying in life, behind every good man is a great woman. Well Commerce Committee, behind every good physician is a great nurse, female or male. Together we work, together we will stand.

Kind Regards,
Julie Cottrell, RN