



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