



SOUTH CAROLINA MILITARY BASE TASK FORCE



To: Senate Medical Affairs Subcommittee
Date: September 17, 2019
Subject: Subcommittee Hearing on H. 3101

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information and ask for your support of **H. 3101**, the **Interstate Medical Licensure Compact**, which passed the House on 02/27/2019 by a vote of 105 to 1.

My name is Bill Bethea and I represent the SC Military Base Task Force. Our mission is to support the military installations in our state and advocate on behalf of service members, veterans, military retirees, and their respective families.

One area of serious concern by the Department of Defense is military spouse licensing. Numerous moves of service families during a military career create a serious hardship, made more difficult because of the delay by various licensing requirements of states in which the service family is stationed.

There are two principle ways to seek to alleviate that hardship:

- Supportive Licensing Laws
- Licensing Compacts

Fortunately, the General Assembly is working on both fronts by bills to provide effective expedited credentialing in a number of professions and to have our state become a member of several key compacts which already include the following:

H. 3349 – Act No. 41 of 2017, “Nurse Licensure Compact.” South Carolina joins the interstate compact to facilitate reciprocal licensure of nurses among states which are members of the compact.

H. 4799 – Act No. 226 of 2018, “Physical Therapy Licensure Compact.” South Carolina joins the interstate compact to facilitate reciprocal licensure of Physical Therapists among states which are members of the compact.

H. 4486 – Act No. 248 of 2018, “Recognition of Emergency Medical Services Personnel Licensure Interstate Compact Act.” Facilitates reciprocal licensure of EMS personnel among states which are members of the compact.



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To compliment the three existing compacts, **H. 3101 – “Interstate Medical Licensing Compact”** seeks to expand upon that process by joining an interstate compact that promotes reciprocity among states who join the compact. In this instance, it addresses the issue of physicians who practice medicine.

Passage of **H. 3101** will allow physicians who are spouses of military service members stationed in South Carolina, service members separating from service, or other physicians moving into our state to have the benefit of reciprocity if they are currently licensed in another state which is a member of the compact.

The Department of Defense each year provides a list of the top ten issues impacting military families. Because many states do not have licensing laws that help ease the burden of repeated changes of state licensure, and some states with such laws do not enforce them in the manner intended, DoD is encouraging the passage of Interstate Compacts as an alternate means of facilitating licensure.

The 2019 DoD Top Ten (copy attached) advocates for states to “enact laws approving these compacts which further expedite licensure in these occupations for separating service members and military spouses.”

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, we thank you for your time and respectfully request your consideration of this bill.

Respectfully,



William L. Bethea, Jr.
Chairman, SC Military Base Task Force



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Key Personnel and Readiness Issues Supporting Service Members and Families 2019

State policy to support identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect: State laws do not require child protective services to identify military families in cases of child abuse and neglect, or to report cases to the appropriate military authorities. Changes in State law can support both local government and the Military Departments concurrently assisting in child abuse or neglect cases involving military families.

Allow Service members to retain their earned priority for receiving Medicaid home and community care waivers: Because States frequently have long waiting lists, Service members face large gaps in service every time they transfer across state lines. Allowing Service members to enroll their exceptional family member in the State they designate as their legal residence (e.g., where they pay taxes, vote) can stabilize their request for support.

Facilitate military spouse teacher certification: Military spouse teachers often encounter difficulty acquiring licensure in a state after a move. Providing flexibility in states accepting an existing standard certificate, establishing a temporary certificate, or expediting application and adjudication processes may alleviate the delays in garnering certification to teach in that particular state.

Remote enrollment: Military children attend an average of 6-8 schools during their school life. Military families transferring on official military orders are usually not eligible to register in courses, programs or lotteries for charter/magnet school entry until they are physically located within district boundaries. Schools could allow preliminary registration/enrollment, or application pending military relocation and waive proof of residence until the family has moved.

In-State tuition: In many States, students with a military sponsor stationed in a State are considered in-State for tuition purposes. However, if the sponsor has a change of station out of State between receiving their letter of acceptance and start of classes the student loses this status. States can alleviate this burden by allowing a spouse or child of an active Service member assigned to duty out-of-State to be deemed an in-State resident for purposes of determining tuition/fees at all State learning institutions as long as the spouse or child resides continuously in-State.

National Guard employment protections during state-sponsored activation: State laws that cover Guard members during State-sponsored mobilizations impact employers within the state. States can modify their laws to protect rights of members of the National Guard during state-sponsored mobilizations who drill outside of the State which they are employed.

Licensing Compacts recognizing separating Service members and military spouses: An increasing number of occupations are establishing compacts that facilitate portability of licenses and opportunities to work in member states with an existing license. Having States enact laws approving these compacts further expedites licensure in these occupations for separating Service members and military spouses.

Pro-bono legal representation for military families: Military families have access to legal assistance attorneys for advice and help with important documents, but they must generally obtain their own counsel to represent them in court. State governments can assist by organizing pro-bono programs that can connect qualified attorneys with Service members and their families in need.

Implementation of supportive licensure laws: Most States have established laws that support licensure requirements for transitioning Service members and active duty military spouses; however, research has shown that some licensing boards have not fulfilled the intent of these laws. State legislatures can assist by requesting occupational licensing boards report on their efforts to implement these laws.

Increase protection under State Supplemental Service members Civil Relief Act provisions: Many Service members find difficulty terminating or suspending certain service contracts when transitioning from one duty location to another, when mobilized or when deployed. Certain provisions could be enacted eliminating or reducing the penalties associated with termination of service on short notice.

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