

February 14, 2022

Members are urged to reach out to House legislators to support and co-sponsor [House Bill 4269](#), which would establish the Nurse Licensure Compact in Illinois. IHA strongly supports this proposal, which would increase access to nurses at a time when these essential roles are critically needed.

**ACTIONS REQUESTED:** Contact your hospital's Representative urging them to support and co-sponsor this legislation. To look up your legislator and send a message of support [click here](#).

**Background:** Initially organized in 2000, thirty-nine jurisdictions are now members of the enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact (eNLC), which allows for multistate licensure to practice and communicate with patients or students, both physically and electronically. Illinois is experiencing a current nurse shortage and will be facing an estimated shortfall of 14,400 nurses by 2025. While the nurse shortage was a critical issue across the country before the COVID-19 pandemic began, the pandemic acutely underscored the need to remove barriers to cross-state practice in order to strengthen the ability of the health care system to adapt care delivery modes and respond to patient care needs.

**Suggested Talking Points:**

- The Nurse Licensure Compact would quickly and efficiently expand access to quality nursing services across the country.
- This allows for more opportunities to fill essential roles at critical times—particularly for facilities operating in underserved, rural and remote areas.
- The Compact would expand telehealth coverage, allowing nurses to practice in any member state through the delivery of virtual visits and other electronically delivered care. This enables facilities to offer patients greater access to those services.
- The Compact will help facilitate emergency preparedness by enabling the healthcare delivery system to react more dynamically to unforeseen and sudden changes in nursing needs. This would apply to a natural disaster, pandemic or other emergency.
- It's important to underscore that safety standards are clearly defined in Compact states.
- Participating states must have uniform licensure requirements, and clear standards are defined for conducting state and federal background checks upon the licensing of all new nurses.
- Additionally, each state fully retains the authority to set its licensure standards. Notably, Illinois is already compliant with the Compact's safety standards.
- The emphasis on safety is extended to information on licensee investigations and any pending disciplinary measures pending in other member states. Not only is this information available through the Compact, Illinois already routinely uses a 24/7 licensure and disciplinary database for all 50 states to verify nurse licensure status, discipline and practice privileges.
- With Illinois—and the rest of the country—facing a significant shortage of nurses in the coming years, recruiting and educating a new generation of nurses will be critical.
- Importantly, the Compact facilitates online nursing education by reducing educators' need for multiple licenses.
- Moreover, the Compact is cost effective, reducing the financial burden on nurses who no longer have to obtain additional nursing licensures. This makes practicing across state borders affordable and convenient.
- There is also a benefit to Illinois' service men and women. If Illinois was a Compact member, military spouse nurses would

be able to seamlessly continue working without obtaining a new license each time they relocate.

- Please support and co-sponsor House Bill 4269.

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