



Senate Bill 341 – Proponent Testimony
Senate Health, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee
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Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on Senate Bill 341, which would permit Ohio to enter the national Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC). My name is Meredith Foxx, and I am Executive Chief Nursing Officer at Cleveland Clinic.

Nurses are more critical than ever and Ohio must answer the call to greater care. Ensuring Ohio is competitive nationally to attract and retain nurses to seamlessly deliver care through the Nursing Licensure Compact is a strong next step for our future.

As the largest employer in Ohio, Cleveland Clinic is dedicated to its nurses, which is the health system's largest caregiver group. The Stanley Shalom Zielony Institute for Nursing Excellence at Cleveland Clinic oversees the practice and education of nearly 23,000 nursing caregivers across inpatient, outpatient, rehabilitation and home care settings. Hospital and surgical nurses provide care for patients in over 4,500 hospital beds and over 225 operating rooms throughout 11 hospitals, 19 family health and surgery centers, and 3 health and wellness centers across northeast Ohio. Cleveland Clinic's fast-paced, technologically advanced environment allows nurses to learn, grow and remain professionally challenged while shaping their careers. The nurses of Cleveland Clinic have vast experience and diverse expertise. Our nurses work in every setting and can be found in positions of leadership, advanced practice, quality, research, education and more.

With advancements in telehealth in recent years, and with the unprecedented challenges that have resulted from the coronavirus pandemic, Senate Bill 341 would improve patient and would make Ohio more competitive. The Nursing Licensure Compact allows for nurses who are residents of NLC states to practice in other NLC states without having to obtain additional licenses.

Patient care as a whole can benefit from more states joining the NLC. In total, 34 states are currently a part of the NLC, including a majority of the states surrounding Ohio: Indiana, Kentucky, and West Virginia. In addition, legislation is currently pending in six states, including Pennsylvania and Michigan. Ohio joining the NLC will make the state more competitive in retaining and attracting nurses, who otherwise may wish to move to a border state to practice.

Senate Bill 341 is especially beneficial to Cleveland Clinic nurses due to our growing presence in Florida, which is currently a member of the NLC. The Florida region is an integral part of Cleveland Clinic in Ohio, with five hospitals and numerous outpatient centers in Broward, Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie and Indian River Counties. Having Ohio join Florida as part of the NLC, would allow our nurses to be portable between the two states to care for patients.



The need for such mobility is highlighted during the current coronavirus pandemic, where more caregivers may be needed to address growing patient volumes in different parts of the system. Similarly, the NLC will allow the Clinic and other providers to more easily bring traveling nurses into Ohio during times when we need to supplement our own nursing staff.

In addition, when Cleveland Clinic needs to support long distance, virtual care, the NLC will avoid having to require nurses to obtain several licenses to practice. With telehealth as the future of healthcare, this is especially critical.

Again, Cleveland Clinic supports Senate Bill 341 and urges the committee to be supportive as well. We thank the bill sponsor, Senator Kristina Roegner, for being a champion of bills like this that address occupational licensing. Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I am available to be contacted with any questions you may have.