



**OHIO ORGANIZATION
FOR NURSING LEADERSHIP**
OHIO HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

**Senate Bill 341
Proponent Testimony
Ohio Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee
November 17, 2020**

Chairman Burke, Vice-Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee, we appreciate the opportunity to share our support on behalf of the Ohio Organization for Nursing Leadership (OONL) for Senate Bill 341 which would enter Ohio in to the enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact.

Due to increasing hospital capacity and needed staffing resources, we regrettably could not join the committee in-person. Please know that passage of Senate Bill 341 is a top priority for OONL, and we look forward to continuing our efforts to see its implementation become a reality.

The Ohio Organization for Nursing Leadership is a state organization of nurse leaders serving as the catalyst for innovative health care in Ohio and the nation. Members of our organization represent nursing leadership from hospitals and health systems across the state. As the recognized center of excellence for clinical leadership, OONL is committed to enhancing health care through education, technology, research, consulting, networking and information sharing. For further information about OONL, its membership and strategic goals, we have attached a fact sheet.

Following extensive research and discussion amongst our membership, in August 2019 we issued the following position statement on the Compact:

The OONL endorses the enhanced Nurse Licensure compact (eNLC) and encourages the state of Ohio to become a member of this compact.

Our organization is committed to ensuring all nurses are able to provide safe and effective health care services to all patients. While providing care, it is crucial that nurses are able to comply with state licensure laws that cross state lines. The provision of care to patients in states in which the nurse is not licensed potentially poses legal concerns regarding the unlicensed practice in those states.

Nurses are faced with a decision to treat a patient in a state which they are not licensed, or decline to provide care to the patient, often after a nurse/patient relationship has been established. This raises potential questions of patient abandonment and puts the nurse, patient and organization at risk. Situations in which this occurs frequently include providing telehealth care, home health, long distance monitoring of patients, hospital follow-up care and the increased mobility of the nursing workforce across state lines.

The enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact (eNLC) allows registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical/vocational nurses (LPN/VNs) to have one multistate license in the primary state of residence (the home state) and practice in other compact states (remote states), while subject to each state's practice laws and discipline.

Participation in the eNLC facilitates safe and effective delivery of health care by nurses while reducing risks of practicing in states where they are not licensed. Further, in catastrophic situations, the ability to quickly mobilize emergency nursing staff is imperative, as demonstrated during Hurricane Harvey in Texas in 2017, the 2019 mass casualties shooting incident in Dayton and presently, the COVID-19 pandemic. Having expedited access to licensed, qualified and competent nurses that are guaranteed through the eNLC is imperative in these times of crisis.

As of September 2020, 34 states are members of the eNLC. A current map of participating states can be viewed here: <https://www.ncsbn.org/nurse-licensure-compact.htm>

Currently, Ohio is nearly surrounded by states participating in the eNLC. Kentucky, West Virginia and Indiana joined the compact, while Pennsylvania and Michigan have introduced legislation to join the compact.

Key components of the eNLC have addressed concerns previously noted by the Ohio State Board of Nursing including: mandatory, finger-print based criminal background checks, and state boards of nursing retaining jurisdiction over important licensing and discipline matters in their respective states.

Because the eNLC provides for more robust governance, state boards of nurses retain jurisdiction over important licensing and disciplinary matter, while at the same time experience a reduction in administrative burden. State boards of nursing are therefore able to focus their attention where it matters most: supporting nurses in their profession and protecting patient safety.

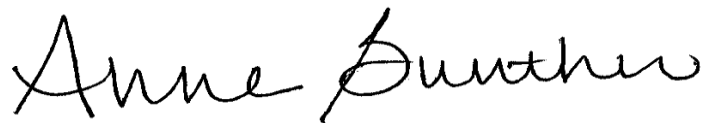
It is for these reasons we overwhelmingly support Ohio's membership in the eNLC.

Of note, OONL has engaged in several meetings and conversations with other interested parties and remains committed to continuing this open dialogue as SB 341 moves through the legislative process.

We would like to thank Senator Roegner for her work to advance this important legislation and look forward to building upon our partnership.

Although we could not be with you in-person, we would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have following its meeting.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration.



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