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Sponsor Testimony

Senate Bill 40

Ohio Senate Health Committee

March 8th, 2023

Chair Huffman, Vice-Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and Members of the Senate Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on S.B. 40, which upon enactment would join Ohio to the “Dentist and Dental Hygienist Licensure Compact.”

The Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact is an interstate occupational licensure compact for dentists and dental hygienists. As this committee knows, an interstate licensure compact is a constitutionally authorized, legally binding, legislatively enacted contract among participating states. States joining a compact agree to recognize a license issued by another compact member state via a “compact privilege”. “Compact privilege,” is the authority given to a professional to practice in a member state which is equivalent to licensure in their home state.

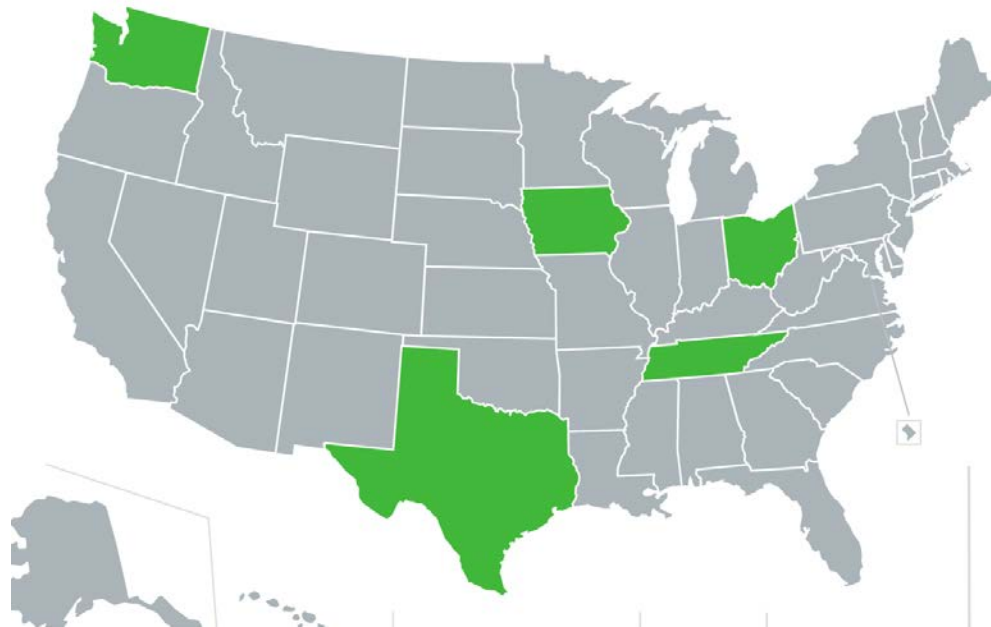
The Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact (“the Compact,”) is similar in form and function to the other compacts this Committee has considered, in that a dentist or dental hygienist must hold an active, unencumbered license in a compact member state to be eligible to apply for a compact privilege. These practitioners must also pass a background check and meet other eligibility requirements related to education and examinations. From a regulatory standpoint, there are no changes to each compact member state’s authority to protect public health and safety through the existing state regulatory structure – a licensee practicing under compact privilege must abide by the laws, regulations and rules for the state in which they are located.¹

The Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact is still in its formative stage, with a stakeholder group coalescing in 2021. This group consisted of representatives from eight state dental boards, including Ohio, who worked collaboratively with various dental schools, the Council of State Governments (CSG), and the Department of Defense (DOD) to develop model language. This language was released in late 2022, and the American Dental Association (ADA) and the American Dental Hygienists’ Association (ADHA) have both given it their stamp of approval. The Ohio Dental Association is also supportive, and they will be in to testify as proponents of this bill.

¹ <https://compacts.csg.org/compact-updates/dentistry-and-dental-hygiene/#:~:text=A%20compact%20privilege%20is,all%20fees%20are%20paid>.

With Compact language approved and finalized, it is now ready for state enactment and the commission will form once seven states have enacted legislation.² Currently, four other states have introduced bills to join the Compact: Tennessee, Iowa, Texas, and Washington.³

Ohio's dentists and dental hygienists chose to work proactively and take a seat at the table during the development process of this compact. It would be wonderful if Ohio could be one of the first seven states to enact legislation so they can keep that seat at the table while establishing rules for the compact. Passing this



bill expeditiously would accomplish that and signal that the Buckeye State will continue to be a national leader in increasing access to care for patients and maximizing mobility for licensed medical professionals.

The lack of occupational licensure reciprocity is a real barrier for individuals seeking to move across state lines. Researchers at the University of Minnesota found that the interstate migration rate for individuals in occupations with state-specific licensing exam requirements is 36% lower relative to those in non-licensed occupations.⁴

Maximizing mobility and ensuring license portability is even more important for our military families. In 2021, Dr. Elizabeth Burgin, a military spouse and licensed mental health counselor provided some statistics on this that I would like to share with you⁵:

- Military families relocate every 2-3 years, which is 10x more often than civilians
- 34% of military spouses hold at least one professional license
- 22% of licensees are unemployed
- There is a 26% wage gap between military licensees and civilian licensees
- 1 in 5 military licensees has waited 10+ months for a license transfer⁶

² [Lines 964-966 of bill](#)

³ <https://ddhcompact.org/compact-map/>

⁴ <https://www.minneapolisfed.org/research/sr/sr561.pdf>

⁵ <https://counselingcompact.org/tool-kit/> (see video time marker 2:05)

⁶ <https://counselingcompact.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/CC-Summit-Slides-2021.pdf>

This Compact supports military families in two distinct ways. First, like other compacts, if a military family gets assigned to a new duty station in a compact member state, the service member or their spouse can continue to work with their current compact privilege. However, this Compact goes beyond others compacts which preceded it though, and specifies that **active-duty military members and their spouses shall not be required to pay the commission fee for a compact privilege; and it allows a remote state to choose to charge a reduced fee or no fee to active-duty military and their spouses if they charge a fee for compact privilege.**⁷

With over 15,000 dentists and dental hygienists licensed in Ohio (including new military licensures in 2022)⁸ and 425,000 nationwide⁹, the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact certainly will help the licensure burden for military families and civilians alike.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

⁷ [Lines 314-319 of the bill](#)

⁸ <https://dental.ohio.gov/static/Annual%20Reports/ANNUAL%20REPORT%20-%20DENTAL%20BOARD%20-%202021%202022.pdf>

⁹ <https://compacts.csg.org/compact-updates/dentistry-and-dental-hygiene/>