

Ohio SB28 Interstate PA license Compact (SB28)

Matt Dean

Senior Policy Fellow, Heartland Impact.

Chair Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio and members:

My name is Matt Dean. I'm a senior policy fellow with Heartland Action, a new public policy advocacy group focused on state based, free market solutions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of [Senate Bill 28](#), the Interstate licensing compact bill for Physician Assistants.

Sen Roegner has earned a national reputation for her work in crafting solution-based multistate agreements that are benefitting patients and providers alike. We at Heartland would like to acknowledge the hard work and skill that these complex agreements take to get done. This committee should be acknowledged for your nation-leading solutions to help Ohioans as well as the member states with whom you partner in interstate agreements.

I would like to address two important policy aspects of this bill that help patients and states.

Patients benefit because their access to a provider will be increased, wait time's cut and preventative care enhanced. The physician shortage crisis in rural America is real and PAs are stepping up, but more help is needed, particularly in rural America. There are 7,200 federally designated professional shortage areas. [Three-in-five of these are in rural areas.](#)

There are [13 physicians/10,000 people in rural areas vs 31/10,000](#) in urban America. As rural physicians retire, [they are not being replaced, creating a widening gap of coverage for rural communities.](#) 41 Ohio counties [are designated](#) as Health Professional Shortage Areas.

The pandemic was a trial by fire in terms of the delivery of telemedicine services. The delivery of care during the past 40 months has introduced telemedicine as an acceptable and sometimes preferred method of treatment by patients. COVID-19 policies created a need to quickly link providers and patients virtually. [CMS is assisting states with the continuation, adoption or expansion of telehealth coverage and payment policies.](#) Importantly, this and other compacts reflect and aid the adoption of telemedicine.

The PA compact will strengthen access to medical services and allow PAs to extend their license across state lines to work to address needs in other compact states as well.

In addition to improving patient access, the PA compact will provide meaningful workforce development opportunities for Ohio. The outlook for PAs is extremely strong. [With a median salary of \\$121,000 and an unemployment rate of just 1.2%,](#) PAs are among the highest rated professions in the medical field. Growth is expected to remain strong with an expected growth [of 28% in the next ten years.](#)

Lastly, like the nurse, physician and therapist compacts that have been passed and enacted by dozens of states, this legislation offers a significant benefit to military families with a mom or dad who is a licensed medical provider. Providing that assurance of stability is an important way to support military families while attracting much needed licensed care providers. [Of the 276,000 military spouses in the](#)

workforce, more than 30% work in fields that require a state-based professional license or certification to practice. Relicensure is a burden military families can avoid with help from this bill.

Thank you members for your time today and your efforts to improve healthcare access.

Heartland Impact can send an expert to your state to testify or brief your caucus; host an event in your state or send you further information on a topic. Please don't hesitate to contact us if we can be of assistance. If you have any questions or comments, contact Heartland's government relations department, at governmentrelations@heartlandimpact.org

.....