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**OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-1500**

**June 4, 2025**

**Ohio State Senate  
Committee on Public Health  
1 Capitol Square  
Ground Floor 40**

**Senator Huffman, Chair**

**Remarks of  
Shane M. Preston  
Great Lakes Region Liaison  
United States Department of Defense-State Liaison Office**

**SB 149, an act for ratification of the Respiratory Care Interstate Compact**

The Department of Defense is honored to express its support for the policies outlined in S.B. 149, an act to ratify the Respiratory Care Interstate Compact. This legislation addresses critical licensing challenges faced by our service members, their families, and the broader public. The compact aims to facilitate the interstate practice of respiratory therapy, reducing regulatory barriers and enhancing access to vital respiratory care services.

My name is Shane Preston, and I serve as the Great Lakes Region Liaison for the United States Department of Defense-State Liaison Office, under the direction of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. Our office collaborates with state officials, policymakers, and stakeholders to address issues impacting military service members, veterans, and their families. Licensure portability for transitioning military members and their active-duty spouses has been a longstanding priority for the Department.

The Respiratory Care Interstate Compact, developed in collaboration with the Council of State Governments (CSG), the Department of Defense (DoD), and relevant professional organizations, promotes the mobility of licensed respiratory therapists by creating reciprocity among participating states. This compact alleviates the burdens of license portability, particularly for military spouses who frequently relocate due to military assignments.

Professional licensure poses significant challenges for military spouses, who are often in licensed occupations at higher rates than their civilian counterparts and face frequent relocations. Obtaining a new license in each state can be time-consuming, costly, and unpredictable, often discouraging military spouses from continuing their careers. The short duration of military assignments, combined with lengthy relicensing processes, can lead to career interruptions or even prompt families to leave military service. By streamlining relicensing through the compact, SB 149 supports military families' financial stability, facilitates their integration into new communities, and creates a valuable pool of skilled professionals for Ohio's workforce.

The compact also enhances public access to respiratory therapy services, addressing workforce shortages and improving patient outcomes. By enabling qualified respiratory therapists to practice across state lines without unnecessary barriers, the compact strengthens Ohio's ability to meet healthcare demands while maintaining robust regulatory oversight to protect public health and safety.

The Department of Defense commends Ohio's ongoing commitment to supporting our uniformed service members and their families. We are grateful for the opportunity to support the policies in SB 149 and appreciate the leadership of Senator Roegner and the Committee on Health in advancing this important legislation. We look forward to seeing this effort progress to improve the quality of life for military families and all Ohioans who rely on respiratory care services.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on S.B. 149 and urge a yes vote today.

Respectfully,

*Shane Preston*

Great Lakes Regional Liaison  
Defense-State Liaison Office