

Senate Health Committee
Senator Stephen A. Huffman, Chair
Wednesday, June 4, 2025
SB 149 – Proponent Testimony
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Ohio Society for Respiratory Care

Chairman Huffman, Vice-Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the Senate Health Committee, the Ohio Society for Respiratory Care (OSRC) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of SB 149: “Enter into the Respiratory Care Interstate Compact.”

SB 149 enters Ohio as a party to the Respiratory Interstate Licensure Compact, the purpose of which is to facilitate the interstate practice of respiratory therapy and improve public access to respiratory care services. It improves public access to Respiratory Care services by providing Respiratory Therapists licensed in a Member State with the ability to practice in other Member States. The Compact preserves the regulatory authority of states to protect public health and safety through the current system of State licensure. Our Respiratory Care profession hopes to join the other health care professionals in Ohio who have enacted similar Interstate Compact Laws, such as nurses, physicians, dentists, physician assistants, dietitians, physical therapists, and more.

Respiratory Therapists play a significant role in providing critically needed services to those with acute and chronic respiratory disease, trauma, and cardiopulmonary collapse common in public health emergencies. We are experts in adult, pediatric and newborn airway management, ventilator care, and cardiopulmonary disease management. This streamlined licensure system allows compact privileges and practice across state lines, allowing rapid deployment without administrative delays and costs of applying for multiple state licenses.

The American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC), our national organization, finalized its Respiratory Care Interstate Compact (RCIC) language in December 2024, after working with the Department of Defense, National Center for Interstate Compacts and Council of State Governments.

The OSRC initially shared this language in January 2025 with the State Medical Board of Ohio (SMBO), the agency which licenses Respiratory Care Professionals (RCPs) in Ohio. The State Medical Board recommended a minor change which was approved by all parties and was included in the bill. SB 149 as written, will:

- Require the SMBO to allow a respiratory therapist licensed in another Compact member state to practice in Ohio, subject to Ohio’s laws and rules governing the practice of respiratory therapy.
- Require the SMBO to appoint a member to the Respiratory Care Licensure Compact Commission – a joint government agency created by the Compact to enforce the provisions and rules of the Compact.
- Requires SMBO to submit data regarding respiratory therapist licensees to the Commission’s data system, including information related to identification, examination, licensure, investigations, compact privilege, and adverse action.

In conclusion, SB 149: "Enter into the Respiratory Care Interstate Compact" achieves the following:

- Increases public access to Respiratory Care services by creating a responsible, streamlined pathway for Licensees to practice in Member States with the goal of improving outcomes for patients.
- Enhances States' ability to protect the public's health and safety.
- Promotes the cooperation of Member States in regulating the Practice of Respiratory Care within those Member States.
- Eases administrative burdens on States by encouraging the cooperation of Member States in regulating multistate Respiratory Care Practice.
- Supports relocating Active Military Members and their spouses.
- Promotes mobility and address workforce shortages.

If there are questions, we would be happy to try and answer them at this time.