



To: Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

From: Rachelle Colombo
Director of Government Affairs

Date: March 8, 2016

Subject: HB 2456; Interstate Medical Licensure Compact

The Kansas Medical Society appreciates the opportunity to appear today on behalf of Kansas physicians in support of HB 2456, the interstate medical licensure compact. First and foremost, this bill establishes a state-based licensure and regulatory framework for telemedicine as an alternative to federal licensure. It defines the practice of medicine as occurring where the patient receives care, requires a physician to be licensed where the patient receives care and establishes a reciprocal licensure process among participating states to achieve that end.

Physicians practicing and treating patients in Kansas can still be licensed through the Board of Healing Arts and will be held to all of the same licensing and disciplinary requirements whether they choose to be licensed through the compact or not. Physician participation in the compact is voluntary and does not affect a physician's qualification for practice in the state where they reside. Additionally, if participation in the compact is determined not to adequately meet the needs of Kansas physicians and patients, the state can withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.

Through participation in the interstate medical licensure compact, Kansas would join the twelve other states that have opted to provide stable, consistent structure for the delivery of healthcare across state lines without ceding state autonomy or authority. The majority of Kansas physicians currently hold licenses in multiple states and would benefit from a more efficient process. Additionally, Kansas patients and health systems would benefit from the opportunity to utilize telemedicine without compromising the standards upheld by the Kansas Board of Healing Arts. The bill would also protect the stable malpractice environment we enjoy in Kansas by requiring providers who treat Kansas patients to participate in the Health Care Stabilization Fund, as all licensed Kansas physicians do.

The interstate medical licensure compact provides an avenue to utilize technology and resources to deliver health care efficiently and safely and ensures that regardless of where the physician resides, Kansas patients will receive the highest standard of care. Rather than forfeiting the benefits of telemedicine for failure to implement a structure that protects Kansas patients and avoids federal licensure, we respectfully request that you support HB 2356 and recommend it favorably for passage.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.