

January 31, 2018

The Honorable Dan Hawkins, Chair
House Health and Human Services Committee-1:30 PM-Room 546S
Committee Assistant – Dee Heideman – 785-296-7631

From: Judy Davis-Cole, AARP Kansas Executive Council

Reference: HB 2496 – Enacting the Nurse Licensure Compact

Good afternoon Chairman Hawkins and Committee Members. My name is Judy Davis-Cole and I serve as a member of the AARP Kansas Volunteer Executive Council. I am a retired nurse with 42 years of professional nursing experience. During fourteen of those years, I worked in home care.

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with more than 315,000 members living in Kansas. AARP is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for all as we age. Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony in support of House Bill 2496.

We are writing to express support for HB 2496, which would include the Kansas in the Interstate Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC). AARP Kansas believes enactment of the NLC will prove critical to enhancing and improving health care access in rural Kansas and across the state, supporting nearly 345,000 family caregivers in Kansas who provide an estimated \$3.8 billion in un-paid care annually in the Sunflower State.

The current system of duplicative licensure for nurses practicing in multiple states is cumbersome and redundant for both nurses and states. The NLC improves an outdated 100-year old licensure model, offering an innovative approach that is safe and in lockstep with 21st century health care. Adopting the Compact is a commonsense solution that enhances patient safety, streamlines regulations and allows nurses the ability to practice across state lines.

The NLC is not a new idea; it has been in existence for more than 15 years and has removed barriers and impediments to borderless practice. Approximately 29 states have adopted the NLC in creating a multi-state license. According to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, 70 percent of nurses nationwide support their state joining the NLC.

Because entry into the NLC Compact is a legislative process in each state wishing to join the compact, states must pass the model legislation without any material differences. Nebraska, Colorado, Oklahoma, and Missouri have already enacted the model language and AARP encourages Kansas to be the next state to successfully pass the model language for the betterment of all Kansans.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comment on HB 2496 and urge passage as soon as possible. We believe this policy change will improve access to licensed nurses, improve patient access to care, improve health outcomes, and reduce costs.

Thank you.