

Senate Public Health and Welfare
Chairman Schmidt and Committee Members
March 21, 2018

HB 2496

Nurse Licensure Compact – Proponent written only

Kansas Health Care Association and the Kansas Center for Assisted Living (KHCA/KCAL) is a trade association with a membership of nursing homes, assisted living, residential health care, home plus, and nursing facilities for mental health. We are the oldest nursing home trade association in Kansas and our members care for nearly 20,000 elders across the state each and every day.

According to the 2016 nursing home cost report data, long term care generates nearly 28,000 jobs at a value of \$706.1 million dollars in annual wages. Work force is the life blood of our profession. Recruiting, hiring and retaining highly competent staff who are committed to quality compassionate care is quite a challenge. We support HB 2496 as a mechanism to expedite the ability of a nurse to enter the state and begin practicing without the long wait of relicensing in Kansas when they have a valid, clean record in another state.

Our members believe in the Nurse licensure Compact and the positives that it will bring to Kansas especially in the long term care arena.

- The first benefit of the compact is choice. For a nurse who travels between states, having a multi-state license allows him or her to move freely within a company that may have homes in a variety of states. For nurses who know that Kansas is the only place they want to practice, the compact will allow for that individual to retain single state licensure.
- Second, reduction in cumbersome and redundant elements of applying for licensure in multiple states.
- Third, by being a part of the compact, the background of a nurse is checked more completely in all of the states he or she has worked and provides a more cohesive method for tracking a nurse's practice.
- Finally, nurses who are part of a multi-state compact can quickly respond in the event of natural disasters which will enhance access to nursing care.

Our members also support HB 2496 as it supports employer friendly, workforce ready and practical economic benefits for both nurses and employers. The current 100 year old model of licensure no longer keeps pace with our mobile society and our technological advances in healthcare and needs updating.

- The compact provides a benefit to Kansas by making the state more attractive through flexibility. No longer will a nurse have to wait months for background checks and temporary licensure before he or she can practice. This is especially important to our military families who frequently relocate every two years.
- HB 2496 expands the workforce mobility while assuring the public health and safety is protected
- 29 states including those surrounding Kansas have implemented the nurse licensure compact.

Kansas must allow employers to access a competitive edge by allowing nurses to be in the compact. Please support HB 2496.

Cindy Luxem
President/CEO
KHCA/KCAL