

Testimony before House Health & Human Services Committee
Informational Hearing on HB 2453 – Dentist & Hygienist Compact
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Chair Landwehr and members of the committee, I would like to express my appreciation for your consideration of the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact. My name is Matt Shafer with The Council of State Governments. My testimony is meant to provide background educational information on the compact.

The Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact was created through a cooperative agreement between the Department of Defense and The Council of State Governments. For the past 18 months, CSG has been developing the compact language with stakeholders within these professions from the American Dental Association, American Dental Hygiene Association, state regulatory boards, the dental education community, and others.

The Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact is similar in form and function to the six occupational licensing compacts that Kansas is already a member of. The Compact will enable dentists and dental hygienists to get a compact privilege to practice in other states that join the compact, rather than get an individual license in every state in which they want to practice.

To utilize the compact, a dentist or dental hygienist must have a license in good standing in a state that is a member of the compact. When a licensee wants to work in another participating state (known as a “remote state”), the licensee obtains a compact privilege. Practitioners must also pass a background check and meet other eligibility requirements related to education and examinations.

Kansas will be able to charge a fee for the compact privilege.

From a regulatory perspective, the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact preserves the regulatory authority of each compact participating state to protect public health and safety

through the existing state regulatory structure. A licensee practicing under a compact privilege must abide by the laws, regulations and rules for that govern the practice of dentistry or dental hygiene in the state in which they are located.

Like all of the other occupational licensing compacts, the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact will be governed by a commission made up of the member states. The delegate will be a representative from the Kansas Board of Dentistry.

The Dentistry and Dental Hygiene Compact also benefits military families. If a military family gets assigned to a new duty station in a compact member state, the service member or their spouse can continue to work with their current compact privilege. If the family gets assigned to a new duty station that is not in a compact member state, the service member or their spouse do not lose access to the compact but would need to get a single-state license in their new state if they wish to continue working in that state.

The compact will come into effect once it's enacted by seven states. The compact is brand new so there are currently no states who have enacted the compact. However, there are six states with introduced legislation this session with several more expected soon.

We don't anticipate substantial additional costs for states participating in the compact. There may be a cost for additional software required to connect to the compact's interstate licensure data system as well as cost(s) associated with the attendance of your state's chosen commissioner to the annual Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact Commission meeting once the compact is enacted in seven states.

Overall, the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact will increase license portability for dental professionals in Kansas, support military families, and improve access to oral health services for Kansas residents, while maintaining the current system of state licensure.