

23b - SB 571- EHEA - MDH - LOS.pdf

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Position: FAV



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Acting Secretary

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Chair, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West Miller Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: Senate Bill 571 – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact – Letter of Support

Dear Chair Pinsky and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of support for Senate Bill 571 (SB 571), Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact. This bill would allow licensed professional counselors to enter an interstate compact and practice in participating states.

The Interstate Counseling Compact has the same form and function as other occupational licensure compacts that Maryland participates in, like the Nurse Licensure Compact and the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact. If passed, SB 571 would authorize interstate practice by professional counselors, both in-person and telehealth, who hold a valid, unrestricted home state license in a Compact member state.

If passed, this legislation would have several benefits, including but not limited to, improving continuity of care when clients travel or relocate and improving access to mental health care services. Additionally, the Compact would preserve the authority of Maryland to protect public health and safety through the existing state regulatory structure. Unlike national licensure initiatives that supersede state regulatory authority, an interstate compact allows a member state to continue to determine the requirements for licensure.

MDH respectfully requests a favorable report on SB 571 so that all Marylanders can access the care they need in the most convenient and effective manner for them.

If you would like to discuss this further, please contact me at (410) 260-3190 or webster.ye@maryland.gov or Heather Shek, Deputy Director of Governmental Affairs at heather.shek@maryland.gov and the same phone number.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Webster Ye". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "W".

Webster Ye
Assistant Secretary, Health Policy

SB571_Support_KennedyKrieger_ProfCounselors.pdf

Uploaded by: Arneson, Emily

Position: FAV



Kennedy Krieger Institute

DATE: February 16, 2021 **COMMITTEES:** Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
BILL NO: Senate Bill 571
BILL TITLE: Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact
POSITION: Support

Kennedy Krieger Institute supports Senate Bill 571 - Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Bill Summary:

Senate Bill 571 creates an interstate licensed professional counselors compact, to be enacted when nine other states have also passed legislation substantially similar to this Act.

Background:

Kennedy Krieger Institute is dedicated to improving the lives of children and young adults with developmental, behavioral, cognitive and physical challenges. Kennedy Krieger's services include inpatient, outpatient, school-based and community-based programs.

Licensed Professional Counselor Services: Kennedy Krieger provides approximately 134,000 behavioral health appointments to 15,000 families per year, of whom over 1000 live outside of the state of Maryland.

Out of State Services: Kennedy Krieger Institute provides specialized services to patients nationally and internationally. In pre-pandemic times, families would need to make arrangements to complete the potentially costly and time consuming trip to Kennedy Krieger Institute to obtain the skilled services their child and/or family required. In our current and uncertain time with COVID-19, the telehealth service delivery model enabled our providers to see patients from 44 of the 50 states in 2020 but barriers with licensure and regulations can cause significant delays and sometimes, an inability to provide the specialized care. With the complete services offered both at Kennedy Krieger Institute locations, in our community, and in the homes of our patients and their families combined with our geographic proximity to numerous surrounding states, there has been and will continue to be extreme struggles in providing care in the absence of an interstate compact.

Rationale:

An interstate compact will allow a formal and legal relationship amongst states that promote a common agenda, to improve the health and wellbeing of the patients and families that we serve so they can live their lives to the fullest. An interstate compact will allow families across participating states to have access to the highest quality of licensed professional counseling services available, while also decreasing the burdens placed on the patient, family, and healthcare system. In addition to improving access to counseling services, the interstate compact would ensure quality control of out of state providers by creating practice requirements and an oversight process. Though the need for an interstate compact has existed for many years, the COVID-19 pandemic has pushed this need to the forefront. Telehealth allows increased access to quality care with a potential that cannot be fully realized with the current absence of an interstate licensure compact. As states begin to modify their telehealth waivers and remove the expedited licensure policies put into place due to the pandemic, access to care and continuity of care will be restricted and, as a result, the full potential of those who need specialized services will not be realized. Many national professional counseling organizations have been working on and supporting interstate compacts for years, including, but not limited to, the American Counseling Association, the American Association of State Counseling Boards, the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, the American Mental Health Counselors Association, and the National Board for Certified Counselors.

Kennedy Krieger Institute requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 571.

2021_MCFP_IP_DSLO_Support_MD_SB571_HB736_LPCC.pdf

Uploaded by: Arnold, Christopher

Position: FAV



OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1500 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-1500

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Chair, Committee on Education, Health & Environmental Affairs
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 West Wing
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401 – 1991

RE: Memorandum of Support – SB0571 – AN ACT concerning Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Senator Pinsky and Honorable Committee Members:

On behalf of military families and the Department of Defense, I am writing to express the support of the Department of Defense for the policy changes proposed in Maryland SB0571 / HB0736, the Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact (LPCC), which addresses licensing issues affecting our service members and their families. I would like to thank you for considering this issue in the 2021 session.

My name is Christopher Arnold. I am the Northeast Regional Liaison for the Defense-State Liaison Office, operating under the direction of Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. Our mission is to be a resource to state policymakers as they work to address quality of life issues of military families.

LPCC seeks to eliminate barriers to interstate professional counseling practice, improve patient access to professional counseling services, and enhance public protection through a shared interstate licensure data system.

Of additional benefit is the compact's utilization of a mutual recognition model of interstate practice, which enhances opportunities of portable careers for military spouses by providing consistent rules which allow licensed members to work in other states through "privilege to practice policies", or more easily transfer their license to a new state.

Military families move every three years on average. LPCC helps military spouses relocate and begin work without delay by reducing the amount of time and effort needed to gain authorization to practice in a new state, even as compared to expedited licensure laws for military spouses.

We appreciate the opportunity to support the policies outlined in SB0571 / HB0736 introduced this session and would like to thank Governor Hogan and Senate President Ferguson for their sponsorship. Joining LPCC will improve access to resources and allow military personnel and spouses to more easily maintain their certifications when relocating. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you might have.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER R. ARNOLD
Northeast Region Liaison
Defense-State Liaison Office

23 - SB 571- EHEA - BOPCT - LOS.pdf

Uploaded by: Bennardi, Maryland Department of Health /Office of Governmen

Position: FAV



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Acting Secretary

Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists
4201 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215
Phone: 410-764-4732

2021 Session
POSITION PAPER

BILL NO: SB 571

COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

POSITION: Support

TITLE: Interstate License Professional Counselors Compact

BILL ANALYSIS: This bill allows licensed professional counselors to enter an interstate compact and practice in the participating compact states; it requires each participating state to meet certain requirements; it authorizes a participating state to charge a certain fee to grant a certain privilege; requires certain professional counselors to meet certain eligibility requirements to receive certain licensure and exercise a certain privilege; etc.

POSITION AND RATIONALE: The Maryland Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists (the “Board”) supports SB 571. The Board recognizes the importance of having an interstate compact for professional counselors. The bill enables licensed professional counselors, who hold a valid license and are in good standing, to be granted a privilege to practice in the participating compact states. This bill allows for greater access to mental health care services by allowing practitioners to practice in participating compact states.

For this reason, the Maryland Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists requests a favorable report on SB 571. For more information, please contact the Board’s Acting Executive Director, Danielle Vallone at 410-764-4734 or Danielle.Vallone@maryland.gov.

The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.

2021 MCHS SB 571 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Elliott, Robyn

Position: FAV



Maryland Community Health System

Committee: Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Bill Number: Senate Bill 571 – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Hearing Date: February 16, 2021

Position: Support

Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) supports *Senate Bill 571 – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact*. The bill proposes that Maryland join an interstate licensure compact for psychologists.

As a network of federally qualified health centers, we are acutely aware of workforce shortages in the behavioral health field. We support interstate licensure compacts as a means of increasing the number of providers who can provide both in-person and telehealth behavioral health care. Compacts are particularly important to our health centers that border other jurisdictions. If those health centers could more easily hire professional counselors licensed in bordering states, they could increase their capacity to serve their patients.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony. We ask for a favorable report on this legislation. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

**5850 Waterloo Road, Suite 140, Columbia, Maryland 21045
410-761-8100**

2021 LCPCM SB 571 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Faulkner, Rachael

Position: FAV



Committee: Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Bill Number: Senate Bill 571

Title: Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Hearing Date: February 16, 2021

Position: Support

The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) supports *Senate Bill 571 – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact*. This bill would enter Maryland into the Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact, which was developed by a National Portability Taskforce comprised of various stakeholders including the American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA).

What the Compact Does

The Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact will become effective once 10 states pass identical legislation. Once this occurs, licensed clinical professional counselors in Maryland will be able to work in states which have entered into the compact. Currently, professional counselors are required to obtain separate licensure in each state they want to practice in.

Clinical professional counselors licensed in Maryland would still be required to meet all licensure requirements set out by the Maryland Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists. In addition, individuals licensed in other states would be subject to Maryland's laws and regulations when providing services in Maryland through the compact. This includes the Board's requirement that all in-state and out-of-state applicants complete the Maryland Law Assessment to determine if applicants are familiar with Maryland's laws and ethical code related to safe and effective practice across several content areas.

Benefits of the Compact

Increased Access to Care through Telehealth: Even prior to the current health care pandemic, Marylanders across the state experienced difficulties accessing behavioral health services. We have seen over the past year the importance that telehealth in meeting the demand for behavioral health services, at a time when we know that there are not enough behavioral health providers overall. The inclusion of a telehealth section in the compact highlights the importance of telehealth across state

lines, while ensuring professional counselors abide by the rules of their home state and the state in which their client is located.

Improved Continuity of Care: One of the major benefits of establishing a compact in Maryland is allowing consumers to access their provider when the provider resides or relocates to another state. As each state has its own unique rules regarding reciprocity, delays in obtaining licensure are commonplace when moving from one state to another. Compacts have the benefit of ensuring that individuals will be able to more readily begin providing services when relocating, while still meeting an agreed upon set of education and training standards. This not only benefits professional counselors, it also benefits employers, which often recruit out-of-state providers in order to meet workforce shortages.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any further information, please contact Rachael faulkner at rfaulkner@policypartners.net or 410-693-4000.

MCA President _SB571_Testimony9.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV



February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson
EHEA Committee
Maryland Senate
11 Bladen Street
Room 2, West Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Carol ZA McGinnis and I am an Associate Professor and Licensed Professional Counselor who resides and practices in Baltimore County, Maryland.

This Compact is important to me because I understand how difficult it can be to find help that is needed by my fellow citizens. Many times, a client may be in need of immediate services and the wait time for an in-State practitioner can be much too long given the seriousness of their symptoms. Allowing for the services across state lines provides our licensed professional counselors with the opportunity to help in other states, and will give our citizens increased access to counseling that is sorely needed now and in the foreseeable future.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

- Enhancing mobility for counselors who meet uniform licensure requirements;
- Increasing access to care for clients;
- Ensuring continuity of care when clients or counselors relocate or travel to other states;
- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain certifications when relocating;
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

The Counseling Compact preserves each state’s authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state’s scope of practice.

As president of the Maryland Counseling Association (MCA), I represent the will of professionals who work and live in the state of Maryland and strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,

Carol ZA McGinnis PhD, SIP, BC-TMH, NCC, LCPC
2020-2021 Maryland Counseling Association (MCA) President
president@mdcounseling.org

SB571_Testimony1.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson
EHEA Committee
Maryland Senate
11 Bladen Street
Room 2, West Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Sharon McClurkin, and I am a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC) who resides and practices in Frederick County, Maryland.

This Compact is important to me because Frederick County borders Pennsylvania and West Virginia and Virginia with Interstate 270 and US Route 15 intersecting the County bringing hundreds of people every day from those bordering states to work in Frederick County and surrounding areas. They don’t understand why I can’t provide therapeutic services for them during their lunch time or immediately after work, both times when it is most convenient for them to receive services. Providing needed services for them does not take away from the ability to provide needed services for those who live in Maryland. It’s about receiving services when it’s convenient, where it’s convenient, and with whom they’re most comfortable. Also, Frederick is home to Hood College, a private higher education institution, whose 2019 Profile states their undergraduate students were from 26 States and Washington, DC. As soon as any of those students return to their home State or DC for any break, we are no longer able to provide their needed services. None of this makes sense. Telehealth is an invaluable tool that has no barriers except those we impose. Removing barriers provides exactly the Continuity of Care we Professional Counselors are Ethically and Morally mandated and expected to provide.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

- Enhancing mobility for counselors who meet uniform licensure requirements;
- Increasing access to care for clients;
- Ensuring continuity of care when clients or counselors relocate or travel to other states;
- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain certifications when relocating;
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

The Counseling Compact preserves each state's authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state's scope of practice.

I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharon A. McClurkin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent loop at the end of the last name.

Sharon A. McClurkin, LCPC
Master of Science from Loyola University Maryland
Owner of Salt and Light Counseling LLC, a private group practice in Frederick, MD
Home address is 8003 Captains Ct., Frederick MD 21701

SB571_Testimony10.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson

EHEA Committee

Maryland Senate

11 Bladen Street

Room 2, West Wing

Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Jasmin Sias and I am a Licensed Graduate Professional Counselor who resides and practices in Baltimore County, Maryland.

This Compact is vital to me because it will allow counselors to provide services to diverse communities that lack quality mental health services. Families should not have to travel hours away from their homes to access a qualified mental profession.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

- Enhancing mobility for counselors who meet uniform licensure requirements;
- Increasing access to care for clients;
- Ensuring continuity of care when clients or counselors relocate or travel to other states;
- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain certifications when relocating;
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

The Counseling Compact preserves each state’s authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state’s scope of practice.

I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,

Jasmin Sias

Licensed Graduate Professional Counselor

Baltimore County, Maryland

SB571_Testimony11.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson
EHEA Committee
Maryland Senate
11 Bladen Street
Room 2, West Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Shannon Graham and I am a licensed professional psychotherapist who resides and practices in Baltimore, MD.

This Compact is important to me because having license portability is critical to providing mental health care across state lines to clients in need. License portability also allows myself and other professional therapists to continue work with existing and new clients, should I or my client(s) choose to move or travel to a different state. The Compact is an important step toward providing seamless and high-quality mental health care for all, regardless of geographic confines.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

- Enhancing mobility for counselors who meet uniform licensure requirements;
- Increasing access to care for clients;
- Ensuring continuity of care when clients or counselors relocate or travel to other states;
- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain certifications when relocating;
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

The Counseling Compact preserves each state’s authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state’s scope of practice.

I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,

Shannon Graham
Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor, 1010 Dulaney Valley Rd., Towson, MD 21204

SB571_Testimony12.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson
EHEA Committee
Maryland Senate
11 Bladen Street
Room 2, West Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Megan Wainwright and I am a LCPC who resides and practices in Montgomery County, Maryland.

This Compact is important to me because telebehavioral health allowed an increased access and continuity of care for clients who otherwise would not have had that opportunity. Being able to practice across state lines allows clients to maintain those therapeutic relationships without pause. Having to terminate with a client because they are returning to college or out of state employment leads to a break in their care ultimately leaving the consumer/client vulnerable for de-stabilization.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

- Enhancing mobility for counselors who meet uniform licensure requirements;
- Increasing access to care for clients;
- Ensuring continuity of care when clients or counselors relocate or travel to other states;
- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain certifications when relocating;
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

The Counseling Compact preserves each state’s authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state’s scope of practice.

I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,



Megan K Wainwright
LCPC Board Approved Supervisor
103 Brookes Ave
Gaithersburg, MD 20877

SB571_Testimony13.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson
EHEA Committee
Maryland Senate
11 Bladen Street
Room 2, West Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Vivian Morgan and I am a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor who resides and practices in Baltimore County, MD.

This Compact is important to me because this service delivery method is necessary for some people due to transportation, health, socio-economic, and other issues that prohibit travel. Mental health is as important as other health issues and should be treated as such. I work with many high school students who go to school out of state and are adjusting to significant life changes and need the support of their community providers. I also believe that individuals have the right to find practitioners who fit their need, no matter where they are located. Mental health services have a component in which the relationship of the counselor and client is critical to the efficacy of care.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

- Enhancing mobility for counselors who meet uniform licensure requirements;
- Increasing access to care for clients;
- Ensuring continuity of care when clients or counselors relocate or travel to other states;
- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain certifications when relocating;
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

The Counseling Compact preserves each state’s authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state’s scope of practice.

I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,

[NAME]
[TITLE], [ADDRESS]

SB571_Testimony14.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

Feb 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson
EHEA Committee
Maryland Senate
11 Bladen Street
Room 2, West Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SUPPORT FOR SB 571 – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Lisa Rabinowitz and I am a LCPC who resides and practices in Baltimore, MD.

This Compact is important to me because I am able to provide services to my clients in my state and other states (traveling, moved and the like). Also, my specialty of ADHD in a couple system makes it very difficult for couples to find an effective therapist in other states, so clients call me from as far as CA, FL and Vermont this year and in the past.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

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- Ensuring continuity of care when clients or counselors relocate or travel to other states;
- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain certifications when relocating;
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

The Counseling Compact preserves each state’s authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state’s scope of practice. I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Thank you,

Lisa Rabinowitz, LCPC
Rabinowitz Counseling Services, LLC
Approved Clinical Supervisor
Gottman Certified Couples Therapist <https://baltimorecounselor.com/>

SB571_Testimony15.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

Feb 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson
EHEA Committee
Maryland Senate
11 Bladen Street
Room 2, West Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SUPPORT FOR SB 571 – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Lisa Rabinowitz and I am a LCPC who resides and practices in Baltimore, MD.

This Compact is important to me because I am able to provide services to my clients in my state and other states (traveling, moved and the like). Also, my specialty of ADHD in a couple system makes it very difficult for couples to find an effective therapist in other states, so clients call me from as far as CA, FL and Vermont this year and in the past.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

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- Increasing access to care for clients;
- Ensuring continuity of care when clients or counselors relocate or travel to other states;
- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain certifications when relocating;
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

The Counseling Compact preserves each state’s authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state’s scope of practice. I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Thank you,

Lisa Rabinowitz, LCPC
Rabinowitz Counseling Services, LLC
Approved Clinical Supervisor
Gottman Certified Couples Therapist <https://baltimorecounselor.com/>

SB571_Testimony16.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson
EHEA Committee
Maryland Senate
11 Bladen Street
Room 2, West Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Paige Lewis and I am a licensed graduate professional counselor who resides and practices in Montgomery County, MD.

This Compact is important to me because I live and practice close to two state lines and it would allow me to provide services to a wider range of clients. It would also prevent a disruption of services for clients, which could be detrimental to the wellbeing of clients, in situations such as the pandemic where clients are unable to come to the office in which I provide services.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

- Enhancing mobility for counselors who meet uniform licensure requirements;
- Increasing access to care for clients;
- Ensuring continuity of care when clients or counselors relocate or travel to other states;
- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain certifications when relocating;
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

The Counseling Compact preserves each state’s authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state’s scope of practice.

I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,

Paige Lewis
Licensed Graduate Professional Counselor, 7201 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda, MD 20814

SB571_Testimony17.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson

EHEA Committee

Maryland Senate

11 Bladen Street

Room 2, West Wing

Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Maya Georgieva and I am a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor in Maryland as well as a Licensed Professional Counselor in Virginia. I reside in Arlington, Virginia and I practice in Falls Church, Virginia. In addition, I teach full-time in a CACREP-accredited graduate counseling program at Messiah University in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. Since 2015, I have actively served the Maryland Counseling Association (MCA).

This Compact is important to me because as a licensed counselor I am ethically obligated to advocate for my clients. As an active member of the Maryland Counseling Association, I hope to represent the voice of our members. I have witnessed firsthand how individuals who have to travel from one state to another during the pandemic, have to discontinue counseling. I have felt helpless and discouraged to see adolescents and adults who have made great strides under my care, suffer exacerbated symptoms once they leave the state. Once a client develops a relationship with a counselor, they may not consider or have a difficult time re-starting therapy in another state with a new professional. The current restrictions for practicing telemental health within one’s state provide an unnecessary barrier for many people who are already struggling.

As a professor teaching in an online graduate program, I have also seen the struggle of our students and future professionals who complete field experiences in one state and after moving, realize they have to meet additional criteria to become licensed and be able to practice. The demand for counseling services is growing and removing the state restrictions will ultimately allow more people to get the help they need.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

- Enhancing mobility for counselors who meet uniform licensure requirements;
- Increasing access to care for clients;
- Ensuring continuity of care when clients or counselors relocate or travel to other states;

- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain certifications when relocating;
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

The Counseling Compact preserves each state's authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state's scope of practice.

I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,

Maya Georgieva, Ed.D., LCPC(MD), LPC(VA)
Assistant Professor, Messiah University
Licensed Counselor, Sunstone Counseling
MASERVIC President
MCA Credentialing Chair
mgeorgieva@messiah.edu
703-673-6147

SB571_Testimony18.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson

EHEA Committee

Maryland Senate

11 Bladen Street

Room 2, West Wing

Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Maya Georgieva and I am a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor in Maryland as well as a Licensed Professional Counselor in Virginia. I reside in Arlington, Virginia and I practice in Falls Church, Virginia. In addition, I teach full-time in a CACREP-accredited graduate counseling program at Messiah University in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. Since 2015, I have actively served the Maryland Counseling Association (MCA).

This Compact is important to me because as a licensed counselor I am ethically obligated to advocate for my clients. As an active member of the Maryland Counseling Association, I hope to represent the voice of our members. I have witnessed firsthand how individuals who have to travel from one state to another during the pandemic, have to discontinue counseling. I have felt helpless and discouraged to see adolescents and adults who have made great strides under my care, suffer exacerbated symptoms once they leave the state. Once a client develops a relationship with a counselor, they may not consider or have a difficult time re-starting therapy in another state with a new professional. The current restrictions for practicing telemental health within one’s state provide an unnecessary barrier for many people who are already struggling.

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- Increasing access to care for clients;
- Ensuring continuity of care when clients or counselors relocate or travel to other states;

- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain certifications when relocating;
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

The Counseling Compact preserves each state's authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state's scope of practice.

I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,

Maya Georgieva, Ed.D., LCPC(MD), LPC(VA)
Assistant Professor, Messiah University
Licensed Counselor, Sunstone Counseling
MASERVIC President
MCA Credentialing Chair
mgeorgieva@messiah.edu
703-673-6147

SB571_Testimony19.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson

EHEA Committee

Maryland Senate

11 Bladen Street

Room 2, West Wing

Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Roni K. White and I am a licensed professional counselor who resides and practices in Montgomery County, Maryland.

This Compact is important to me for professional equity and professional serviceability. Instituting a Counseling Compact assists states to achieve alignment in credentialing standards which will have a positive impact on accredited graduate degree programs across the nation, which will equip new professionals with the ability to apply for licensure and serve in a state in need. For established licensed counselors the Counseling Compact creates opportunity to provide ethical services across state lines to those in need. It is difficult for many clients to terminate mental health services due to relocation or job placements, the Counseling Compact can provide an option for continuity of care. I have received inquiry calls to my business seeking services as the caller could not find a licensed therapist in their area or a licensed counselor meeting their preferences in their area. It is incredibly challenging to turn away people in need due to a state line barrier. As SAMHSA, many organizations, and mental health professionals across the nation are actively working to dismantle the stigma on therapy to encourage those suffering to receive help, we need to remove barriers and increase access to ensure help is available when sought.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

- Enhancing mobility for counselors who meet uniform licensure requirements;
- Increasing access to care for clients;
- Ensuring continuity of care when clients or counselors relocate or travel to other states;
- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain certifications when relocating;
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

The Counseling Compact preserves each state's authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state's scope of practice.

I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Roni K. White". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Roni K. White, NCC, LCPC
Psychotherapist
Apricity Wellness Counseling
12 S. Summit Ave. 100-A-2, Gaithersburg, MD 20877

SB571_Testimony2.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson
EHEA Committee
Maryland Senate
11 Bladen Street
Room 2, West Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Kshipra Jain and I am a Licensed Professional Counselor who resides and practices in Washington, DC.

This Compact is important to me because there is a huge gap between the need for mental health services and the number of licensed providers who are able to serve clients in an ethical and safe manner. The education and training that we receive as mental health professionals is vigorous, regardless of state, as is the number of hours that we are required to put into continued education post-licensure. As such, the ability to practice across statelines will significantly allow for the reduction of inequities in terms of access to culturally competent mental and behavioral health services, based on socioeconomic status, (dis)ability status, gender diversity and sexuality, and other barriers to receiving adequate care. This is an important step in advocating for marginalized communities, who need treatment and support, yet may not be able to safely make it to in-person appointments, or find a well-suited clinician who specializes in the care they need, during a pandemic or otherwise.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

- Enhancing mobility for counselors who meet uniform licensure requirements;
- Increasing access to care for clients;
- Ensuring continuity of care when clients or counselors relocate or travel to other states;
- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain certifications when relocating;
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

The Counseling Compact preserves each state’s authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state’s scope of practice.

I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,



Kshipra Jain, LPC, NCC

Therapist & Clinical Supervisor | 2480 16th St NW, Washington, DC 20009

SB571_Testimony20.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson
EHEA Committee
Maryland Senate
11 Bladen Street
Room 2, West Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is **Loretta Collins, and I am a Licensed Graduate Professional Counselor who resides and practices in Bethesda, MD.**

This Compact is important to me because the ability to provide telebehavioral health to clients across state lines not only allows people who need psychological help to receive it but for clients who move out of state to continue with a trusted therapist.

As you know, services for mental health cost the United States over \$201 billion dollars a year according to Charles Roehrig’s 2016 article entitled, Mental Disorders Top The List Of The Most Costly Conditions In The United States: \$201 Billion. Teletherapy and streamlining practice across state lines not only saves on overhead for therapists, which can help cut costs for their clients but also for the economy.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists, and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,

Loretta Collins

Loretta Collins, LGPC
6025 Onondaga Road
Bethesda, Maryland 20816
Loloo5674@gmail.com

SB571_Testimony3.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson
EHEA Committee
Maryland Senate
11 Bladen Street
Room 2, West Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SUPPORT FOR SB 571 – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for HB 736 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Catherine Eaton and I am a life long Maryland resident with a small business working as a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor in Montgomery County. I also work as a remote supervisor for the Tri-County Youth Services Bureau, Inc, which provides school based counseling services for Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary’s Counties.

This Intrastate Compact is imperative for Maryland clinicians and residents because many of our clientele move among the DVM area and clients want to continue services with their current provider instead of starting over or having to join a long waitlist in their new residence. By providing clinicians the opportunity to practice over state lines via telehealth, we can increase access of care with qualified mental health professionals at a time when the need is greatest due to the pandemic.

There are similar intrastate licensing compacts already in place for other medical professionals such as nurses and adding this services for licensed clinical counselors would be mutually beneficial to all states involved.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

- Enhancing mobility for counselors who meet uniform licensure requirements;
- Increasing access to care for clients;
- Ensuring continuity of care when clients or counselors relocate or travel to other states;
- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain certifications when relocating;
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

The Counseling Compact preserves each state’s authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state’s scope of practice.

I strongly urge you to support this legislation and have Maryland be the first state to join the Counseling Compact!

With appreciation,

Catherine Eaton LCPC, GCDF, NCC
Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and Board Approved Clinical Supervisor
Global Career Development Facilitator
National Board-Certified Counselor, Maryland License #LC5355
Secretary, Association for Adult Development and Aging (AADA)
Trustee, National Employment Counseling Association (NECA)
Past-President, Maryland Counseling Association (MCA 2018)

Pronouns: She/Her/Hers Phone: 240-401-8686 Fax: 888-977-1530 Email: counselorc@icloud.com
Upcounty Pastoral Counseling Services, 915 Russell Ave, Suite B, Gaithersburg, MD 20879
Residential Address: 8 Russell Ave, Unit #402, Gaithersburg, MD 20877

SB571_Testimony4.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV



John Duggan, EdD, LCPC

Silver Spring, MD • 202.374.1000 • JohnDuggan@dcDiversity.com

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson
EHEA Committee
Maryland Senate
11 Bladen Street
Room 2, West Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

Please accept my testimony in support of SB 571 – The Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact. I am a Montgomery County resident and a member of the Maryland Counseling Association (MCA).

I hold a license to practice as a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor, and I'm recognized as a Board Approved Supervisor in the Practice of Clinical Professional Counseling by the Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists for Maryland. I also hold professional licenses issued by the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Health Professions Board of Counseling and the Board of Professional Counseling in the District of Columbia.

Often, clients work or travel from Maryland to neighboring jurisdictions. Possessing interstate practice privileges becomes an ethically necessary yet expensive proposition when providing behavioral health services in such a highly mobile region.

The Compact is a critical initiative that would eliminate barriers to the interstate practice of professional counseling. The Counseling Compact would improve client access to professional counseling services and enhance public protection through a shared interstate licensure data system.

The Counseling Compact utilizes a "mutual recognition" model of interstate practice, whereby Compact member states agree to "recognize" valid licenses issued by other member states. To use the Compact, a professional counselor must have a license in good standing in their home state—their primary state of residence—and the home

state must be a member of the Compact. When a licensee wants to work in another member state (known as a “remote state”), the licensee must obtain a “privilege to practice” from the Counseling Compact Commission, the interstate body composed of member state officials tasked with administering the Compact upon its enactment by ten states. A privilege to practice is equivalent to a license to practice professional counseling in the remote state.

The Counseling Compact preserves each member state’s authority to protect public health and safety through the existing state regulatory structure. Unlike national licensure initiatives that supersede state regulatory authority, an interstate compact allows a member state to continue to determine the requirements for licensure in that state, as well as to maintain that state’s unique scope of practice for all professional counselors practicing in that state, whether through a state-issued license or through a privilege to practice.

Membership in the Counseling Compact would confer many benefits for the State of Maryland. For example, the Compact:

- Improves access to professional counseling services for residents of Maryland;
- Preserves the existing state-based licensure system;
- Improves continuity of care for residents;
- Contains a specific provision allowing for interstate practice via telehealth;
- Simplifies and speeds up the current interstate licensure process;
- Requires continuing education for all who practice under the Compact; and
- Improves portability for military spouses:

Overall, the Counseling Compact will support military families, improve access to and continuity of care for Maryland residents, and increase license portability for professional counselors based in neighboring jurisdictions while maintaining the current state system licensure.

The Compact allows sharing investigative and disciplinary information among member states, thereby affording the State of Maryland Board of Professional Counselors Therapists better processes to protect public health, safety, and welfare of Maryland residents.

For the reasons stated above, I strongly urge FAVORABLE support for SB 571 – The Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact.

Respectfully Submitted,

John P. Duggan, EdD, LCPC (MD), LPC (DC, VA), LSATP (VA)

SB571_Testimony5.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

Ellen M. Dumer, LCPC
Your Best Life Counseling, LLC
217 E. Churchville Road - Bel Air, MD 21014
888-610-7226 - edumer226@gmail.com

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson
EHEA Committee
Maryland Senate
11 Bladen Street
Room 2, West Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** - Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the "Counseling Compact" to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Ellen Dumer, LCPC and I am a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor who resides and practices in Harford County, Maryland.

This Compact is important to me because is important to me and to my clients as it provides easier access to services. This is especially true for clients who are elderly, disabled, without transportation, and those who have work or home responsibilities that impact their ability to take time out of their schedule for transportation to an appointment. It is widely known that mental health services have been limited by many factors over the past year, with COVID being the most frequent reason for increased anxiety and depression across all demographics. My inquiries from new clients for telehealth has increased significantly. The location of my practice is a factor as clients from neighboring states who would otherwise be able to travel prefer not to have in-person visits.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

- Enhancing mobility for counselors who meet uniform licensure requirements;
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The Counseling Compact preserves each state's authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state's scope of practice.

I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,

SB571_Testimony6.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson

EHEA Committee

Maryland Senate

11 Bladen Street

Room 2, West Wing

Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Sara Pula and I am a Counselor Educator and Clinical Mental Health Counselor who resides and practices in Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

This Compact is important to me because increased access to counseling services across state lines is critical, particularly in an area such as ours that borders other jurisdictions such as Virginia, DC, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. Counselors residing in Maryland often have clients who move to one of these local areas and due to current licensure regulations must find a new counselor and start the process over, even if they’ve been working with a counselor for some time and making great progress. I can’t tell you how disruptive and harmful this is to the well-being of our clients. The Counseling Compact would allow counselors to more easily serve clients as they relocate or move back and forth across state lines (e.g., Federal workers, college students, etc).

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

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I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,

Sara Pula, PhD, LCPC ACS
President-Elect, Maryland Counseling Association
1179 Bay Highlands Drive, Annapolis, MD

SB571_Testimony7.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson
EHEA Committee
Maryland Senate
11 Bladen Street
Room 2, West Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Jason Quarantillo and I am a Professional Counselor who resides and practices in Harford County, MD.

This Compact is important to me because telebehavioral health services have become such a valuable way of supporting clients in need and increasing access and availability would be a valuable step. Being able to continue to provide support even in the situations where clients have crossed state lines makes a lot of sense when the wellbeing and best interest of the client is in mind.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

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I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,
Jason Quarantillo, LCPC
2015 Emmorton Road suite 201, Bel Air MD 21015

SB571_Testimony8.pdf

Uploaded by: Marsalek, Dominique

Position: FAV

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson
EHEA Committee
Maryland Senate
11 Bladen Street
Room 2, West Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Melissa Wesner and I am a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor who owns a group counseling practice in Towson, Maryland.

This Compact is important to me because counselors and clients are more mobile than ever. This compact will increase the likelihood that clinicians can continue working with their clients without interrupting their care when the client moves out of state. It would also mean that therapists are able to meet with their clients while they are out of state for work or family. At present, the current laws result in gaps when clients go out of state temporarily, and it results in clients needing to find new providers when they move. Gone are the days when people grow up in one place and stay there for the rest of their lives. Our professions and the legislation that guides them need to change with the times, so that they reflect people’s real lives.

As we have seen with the temporary guidelines in place for COVID, flexibility to practice between states is incredibly important. For example, COVID and state guidelines that prohibit practicing counseling between state lines has resulted in college students needing to find new providers at the start of the pandemic when they were forced to move back home with family. This alone demonstrates the need for greater flexibility and change. COVID has shown mental health professionals, insurance companies, and the world that new technologies that allow for telehealth, online medical appointments, work from home, and schooling from home are vital. It has shown that we can be more flexible than we once were.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

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- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain certifications when relocating;

- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

The Counseling Compact preserves each state's authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state's scope of practice.

I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,

Melissa Wesner, LCPC
828 Dulaney Valley Road, Suite 12
Towson, MD 21204

SB571- Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors

Uploaded by: Matthews, Dakota

Position: FAV



John Hartline, Chairman

50 Harry S. Truman Parkway • Annapolis, MD 21401
Office: 410-841-5772 • Fax: 410-841-5987 • TTY: 800-735-2258
Email: rmc.mda@maryland.gov
Website: www.rural.maryland.gov
Charlotte Davis, Executive Director

Testimony in Support of
Senate Bill 571 – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
February 16, 2021

The Rural Maryland Council **Supports** SB 571 - Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact. The purpose of SB571 is to create a compact of licensed professional counselors. The compact will allow counselors who are licensed in their home state to also be able to practice within the other states in the compact. This compact will only come into effect after ten states enact the compact as law. Each state that wants to enter the Compact must meet certain requirements, such as having certain educational and legal requirements set for a counselor to be licensed in the state. A counselor that wants to provide services to one of the member states must also meet certain requirements, such as being licensed by their home state, meeting educational requirements, paying any fees, and meeting any jurisdictional requirements of the remote state where they are seeking to practice.

The goal of the Compact is to increase access to professional counseling services by recognizing licensees from other states. By allowing a licensed counselor that is licensed in another state to practice in remote states through the Compact, it will allow for more access to licensed counselors, specifically in the areas that lack these types of specialty services. Rural areas tend to lack access to specialty healthcare, including access to mental health services. The bill will also allow for counselors to provide telehealth services to remote states. This once again would help the rural areas of the membership states. Because many licensed counselors may not be located near the residents of rural areas, rural residents are often forced to go without getting the counseling they need. Expanding the number of licensed counselors available will allow for more rural residents to have access to the specific counselor that best suits their needs.

While the country as a whole is facing a shortage in mental healthcare workers, these shortages are the worst in rural and non-metropolitan areas. According to the American Journal of Preventative Medicine, 65% of non-metropolitan counties do not have a psychiatrist compared to only 27% of metropolitan counties, and 47% of non-metropolitan counties do not have access to a psychologist compared to only 19% of metropolitan counties.

SB571 would allow for more access to counselors for those who are in need of them by allowing counselors who are already licensed in their home state to provide counseling to individuals in other membership states. The Council respectfully asks for your **favorable support** of SB571.

The Rural Maryland Council (RMC) is an independent state agency governed by a nonpartisan, 40-member board that consists of inclusive representation from the federal, state, regional, county and municipal governments, as well as the for-profit and nonprofit sectors. We bring together federal, state, county and municipal government officials as well as representatives of the for-profit and nonprofit sectors to identify challenges unique to rural communities and to craft public policy, programmatic or regulatory solutions.

“A Collective Voice for Rural Maryland”

MRHA SB571 - Interstate Licensed Professional Coun

Uploaded by: Orosz, Samantha

Position: FAV



Statement of Maryland Rural Health Association

To the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

February 16, 2021

Senate Bill 571 Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, Senate President, and members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, the Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA) is in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 571 Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact.

MRHA supports this legislation that facilitates the entrance of Maryland professional counselors into the Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact. Further, MRHA supports the general purpose of this compact in that it improves the public's access to counseling services and improves on data management practices necessary to maintain this compact.

Rural Marylanders encounter many barriers to accessing behavioral health services. The formation of this compact would positively impact rural communities' access to quality counseling services, while promoting health equity among rural and non-rural populations across the state. The integration of Maryland counselors into this compact will help to achieve greater health equity and advanced data management practices to inform on provider details across rural Maryland and beyond.

MRHA's mission is to educate and advocate for the optimal health and wellness of rural communities and their residents. Membership is comprised of health departments, hospitals, community health centers, health professionals, and community members in rural Maryland.

Rural Maryland represents almost 80 percent of Maryland's land area and 25% of its population. Of Maryland's 24 counties, 18 are considered rural by the state, and with a population of over 1.6 million they differ greatly from the urban areas in the state.

And while Maryland is one of the richest states, there is great disparity in how wealth is distributed. The greatest portion of wealth resides around the Baltimore/Washington Region; while further away from the I-95 corridor, differences in the social and economic environment are very apparent.

MHRA believes this legislation is important to support our rural communities and we thank you for your consideration.

Lara Wilson, Executive Director, larawilson@mdruralhealth.org, 410-693-6988

SB571_Professional Counselors Interjurisdictional

Uploaded by: Taylor, Allison

Position: FAV



Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the Mid-Atlantic States, Inc
2101 East Jefferson Street
Rockville, Maryland 20852

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Senate Education, Health, and
Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SB 571 – Support

Dear Chair Pinsky and Members of the Committee:

Kaiser Permanente is pleased to support SB 571 – “Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact.”

Kaiser Permanente is the largest private integrated health care delivery system in the United States, delivering health care to over 12 million members in eight states and the District of Columbia.¹ Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States, which operates in Maryland, provides and coordinates complete health care services for approximately 775,000 members. In Maryland, we deliver care to over 450,000 members.

Kaiser Permanente supports this legislation as our organization employs professional counselors in Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia. While all of our providers are licensed in all three jurisdictions, this bill will make it easier for these professionals to provide care in a variety of locations where and when they are needed. Given the effects of the pandemic and the constant variance of staff available to care for our patients, this allows seamless transition across state lines to practice in areas that are highly concentrated with the need of this facet of care.

Social distancing and isolation have negatively affected our population’s mental health and created new barriers for those already in need of behavioral health resources. As the pandemic wears on, ongoing legislative measures are necessary in mitigating exacerbation of poor mental health and other medical outcomes. SB 571 provides greater accessibility of psychiatric assistance for both individuals and families who are in great need in our service area.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to contact Allison Taylor at Allison.W.Taylor@kp.org or (202) 924-7496 with questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Allison Taylor".

Allison Taylor
Director of Government Relations
Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Mid-Atlantic States, Inc.

¹ Kaiser Permanente comprises Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., the nation’s largest not-for-profit health plan, and its health plan subsidiaries outside California and Hawaii; the not-for-profit Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, which operates 39 hospitals and over 650 other clinical facilities; and the Permanente Medical Groups, self-governed physician group practices that exclusively contract with Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and its health plan subsidiaries to meet the health needs of Kaiser Permanente’s members.

SB 571- Interstate Licensed Professional Counselor

Uploaded by: Witten, Jennifer

Position: FAV



Maryland
Hospital Association

February 16, 2021

To: The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky, Chair, Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee

Re: Letter of Support- Senate Bill 571- Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chair Pinsky:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 60 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 571.

Just 39,080 of the estimated 436,278 people in Maryland who need substance use disorders (SUD) treatment receive it—roughly 9%.¹ Maryland hospitals support measures to strengthen our health care workforce. Yet, the state faces an ongoing shortage of behavioral health professionals qualified to treat people with SUD.

Streamlining the process to license professional counselors in multiple states—through the interstate compact allowed in SB 571—would improve access to care, particularly for specialized services.

Lack of licensure portability is one of the most critical issues impacting counselors and clients and harms access to mental health services for Marylanders in underserved areas. It also fails to address the mobile nature of health care providers, forces patients to seek new counselors when they move, and prohibits counselors from continuing their work with patients who move to a new jurisdiction. Most states require counselors to be licensed in the state where the patient resides, which limits tele-behavioral health options. It is difficult for counselors to transfer their licenses from one state or jurisdiction to another due to independent jurisdictional licensing rules and regulations. Interstate compacts, established by SB 571, address these issues.

Compacts offer a pathway for counselors to move seamlessly from one state to another. Compacts work on rules and regulations agreed to by participating states to allow health occupation boards to maintain their authority over licensed professionals. This committee passed similar legislation to ensure nurses and doctors have comparable compacts, which successfully improved access to needed services. We urge the committee's *favorable report* on this bill to ensure access to robust behavioral health services for Marylanders suffering from mental health and substance use disorder conditions.

For more information, please contact:
Jennifer Witten, Vice President, Government Affairs
Jwitten@mhaonline.org

¹ The Maryland Addictions Directors Council. (n.d.). "[By the Numbers: Workforce Shortage](#)".

Senate Bill 571 - Interstate Licensed Professional

Uploaded by: Whitaker, Jake

Position: FWA



LARRY HOGAN
GOVERNOR

STATE HOUSE
100 STATE CIRCLE
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1925
(410) 974-3901
(TOLL FREE) 1-800-811-8336

TTY USERS CALL VIA MD RELAY

Senate Bill 571 - Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact
Position: Support with Amendment
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
February 16, 2021

Dr. Aliya Jones, Deputy Secretary, Behavioral Health Administration, Maryland Department of Health
Jake Whitaker, Deputy Legislative Officer, Governor's Office

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee:

Senate Bill (SB 571) will increase meaningful access to counseling services, including mental health and substance use disorder services, by eliminating barriers currently precluding out-of-state professional counselors from serving Maryland patients. The Nurse Licensure Compact and the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact have been successful in increasing the availability of healthcare practitioners in Maryland and the Counseling Compact that would be established under SB 571 will be another important step in achieving this goal.

The Counseling Compact will enhance licensure portability for practitioners wishing to practice across state lines while allowing the Maryland State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists (BOPCT) to protect patients through enhanced sharing of licensure information. The Counseling Compact does not limit BOPCT's ability to protect public health and safety through existing Maryland statutory and regulatory frameworks. Under the Counseling Compact, BOPCT will continue to determine requirements for licensure and the scope of practice for all professional counselors wishing to practice in Maryland.

Since taking office, Governor Hogan and Lieutenant Governor Rutherford have remained committed to addressing the heroin and opioid epidemic, including expanding access to critical behavioral health and substance use disorder treatment services. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the need for these critical treatment services. Drug overdose deaths in Maryland and across the United States have increased since the beginning of the pandemic.

In keeping with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor's commitment to reducing barriers to critical behavioral health services, the Counseling Compact will result in a much needed increase in the number of professional counselors in Maryland. According to data from the Maryland Medicaid Program and the Behavioral Health Administration, the number of people who accessed mental health services increased from 7,398 in 2019 to 106,642 in 2020. Improving access to mental health and substance use disorder treatment services will remain critical even after the COVID-19 pandemic has ended.

For these reasons, the Administration respectfully requests the Committee accept the following amendment and vote favorably on SB 571.

AMENDMENT

On page 29, in line 29, strike “shall take effect July 1, 2021” and substitute “is an emergency measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health or safety, has been passed by a ye and nay vote supported by three-fifths of all the members elected to each of the two Houses of the General Assembly, and shall take effect from the date it is enacted”.

Rationale:

After consulting with stakeholders, including substance use disorder treatment services providers, we concluded that there is an immediate need for more professional counselors in Maryland.