

**SB139\_Support\_KennedyKrieger\_OTCompact.pdf**

Uploaded by: Arneson, Emily

Position: FAV



# **19 - SB 139 - Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensure**

Uploaded by: Bennardi, Maryland Department of Health /Office of Governmental Affairs

Position: FAV



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

Board of Occupational Therapy Practice  
c/o Spring Grove Hospital Center  
55 Wade Avenue  
Tuerk Building, 2nd floor  
Baltimore, MD 21228  
Phone: 410-402-8556

**2021 SESSION  
POSITION PAPER**

**BILL NO: SB 139**

**COMMITTEE: Education, Health and Environmental Affairs**

**POSITION: Support**

---

**TITLE:** Interstate Occupational Therapy License Compact

**BILL ANALYSIS:** This bill allows the Maryland Board of Occupational Therapy Practice (the “Board”) to join an interstate license compact.

**POSITION AND RATIONALE:**

The Board is in support of SB 139. During the age of telehealth, and while this country is experiencing a pandemic, it is essential for occupational therapists (OTs) and occupational therapy assistants (OTAs) to treat patients in states that are in need of OTs and OTAs. The Board has spoken to other Boards who are participating in compacts and believe that the positives greatly outweigh any negatives that may come from joining a compact.

The Board feels assured that any financial impact will be minimal and that there will be good communication between the states as far as potential disciplinary issues.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony. The Maryland Board of Occupational Therapy Practice respectfully requests a favorable report on SB 139. For more information, please contact the Board’s Executive Director, Lauren Murray at 410-402-8556 or [lauren.murray@maryland.gov](mailto:lauren.murray@maryland.gov).

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

**APTA MD - Support - IOTLC - Senate Bill 139.pdf**

Uploaded by: Brocato, Barbara

Position: FAV

January 26, 2021

## Board of Directors

### President

Kevin Platt, PT, DPT, MBA

### President Elect

JD Sheppard, PT, DPT

### Vice President

Roy Film, PT, DPT, MPT

### Secretary

Rachel Skolky, PT, DPT

### Treasurer

Melissa Reinhardt, PT, MSPT

### Director for Education

Gretchen Michaels, PT

### Director for Gov't Relations

JD Sheppard, PT, DPT

### Director for Reimbursement

Carol Zehacker, PT, DPT, MS

### Director

Monique Caruth, PT, DPT

### Director

Richard T. Peret, PT

### Chief Delegate

Linda Horn, PT, DScPT

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

### RE: Senate Bill 139 - Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact - SUPPORT

Dear Chair Pinsky,

The American Physical Therapy Association Maryland is writing to register our strong support of Senate Bill 139, the Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact (IOTLC). The IOTLC is a contract individual states can join to allow occupational therapists (OTs) easier access to extend their license privileges in other states. Under the IOTLC, OTs licensed in their home state and holding a Compact License are able to practice in any other participating state (s) without having to undergo a redundant, lengthy and costly licensure process in each state.

Passage of the IOTLC legislation is critical for a number of reasons including:

- Allow licensed occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants to practice across state lines (e.g., telehealth)
- Improve consumer access to occupational therapy
- Enhance mobility of occupational therapy practitioners (e.g., spouses of relocating military families, staff of travel therapy companies)
- Improve continuity of care
- Address competition issues raised by the Federal Trade Commission and others
- Preserve and strengthen the state licensure system
- Enhance the exchange of licensure, investigatory, and disciplinary information between member states.

Again, on behalf of the 1,752 members of APTA Maryland, we support the passing of the IOTLC and ask for a FAVORABLE report on Senate Bill 139. Thank you for the opportunity to provide our feedback.

Sincerely,



Kevin Platt, PT, DPT, MBA  
President, APTA Maryland

**2021 MOTA SB 139 Senate Side.pdf**

Uploaded by: Faulkner, Rachael

Position: FAV



# Maryland Occupational Therapy Association

---

PO Box 36401, Towson, Maryland 21286 ♦ [mota.memberlodge.org](http://mota.memberlodge.org)

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee</b>
<b>Bill Number:</b>	<b>Senate Bill 139</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact</b>
<b>Hearing Date:</b>	<b>January 26, 2021</b>
<b>Position:</b>	<b>Support with Amendment</b>

---

The Maryland Occupational Therapy Association (MOTA) strongly supports *Senate Bill 139 – Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact*. This bill would enter Maryland into the Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact. This compact was developed by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), in partnership with the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT).

## What the Compact Does

The Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact will become effective once 10 states pass identical legislation. Once this occurs, occupational therapists (OTs) and occupational therapy assistants (OTAs) will be able to work in states which have entered the compact. Currently, occupational therapy practitioners are required to obtain licensure in each state they want to practice in.

Occupational therapy practitioners licensed in Maryland would still be required to meet all licensure requirements set out by the Maryland Board of Occupational Therapy Practice. In addition, individuals licensed in other states would be subject to Maryland's laws and regulations when providing services in Maryland through the compact.

## Status of Compact in Neighboring States

We are expecting at least 13 states to consider compact bills this year, so it is feasible that the Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact could be activated in the near future. Maryland has the unique opportunity to improve access to occupational therapy in our region, as Virginia and Delaware are planning to introduce compact legislation this year, and we understand that Pennsylvania may be considering legislation as well.

## Benefits of the Compact

Increased Access to Care through Telehealth: Compacts provide for increased access, including telehealth services across state lines. Even though the interest and use of telehealth has increased over the past several years, occupational therapists still face a myriad of differing state laws, including requirements that



OT practitioners be licensed in the state the patient is located. For consumers, this means many are unable to access services via telehealth from an OT practitioner if they are not located in the same state, even if services are provided through telehealth.

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. While this benefits the OT practitioner and consumers, it also benefits employers, such as local school systems, hospitals, and long-term care facilities, which often experience workforce shortages and may need to recruit out-of-state providers.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at [relliott@policypartners.net](mailto:relliott@policypartners.net) or (443) 926-3443.

**Dorri Gowe-Lambert - Support SB 139.pdf**

Uploaded by: Gowe-Lambert, Dorri

Position: FAV



BUILDING BRIDGES  
PEDIATRIC THERAPY SERVICES

Building Bridges Pediatric Therapy Services  
2326 Goddard Parkway, Suite E  
Salisbury, MD 21801

January 21, 2021

Dear Senator Carozza:

I am writing to thank you for your support and advocacy regarding the Interstate Professional Licensing Compact for Occupational Therapists. This legislation will be extremely beneficial in many ways.

I am the owner of Building Bridges Pediatric Therapy Services in Salisbury, MD and Easton, MD. We provide occupational therapy, speech-language pathology and physical therapy to the children of the Eastern Shore of Maryland. This is also the Delmarva Peninsula which as you know includes Delaware, Maryland and Virginia. There are a few situations recently where this compact would have been beneficial.

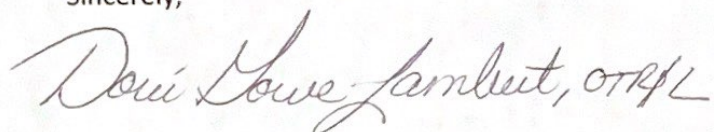
When the pandemic began, we had to immediately close our clinics and change our entire service delivery model to telehealth. This faced us with many challenges of course, but one was that we had clients whose residence was technically the Eastern Shore of Virginia or Delaware. Due to current licensure laws, we were unable to provide continuity of care to them as our therapists (licensed in Maryland) could not deliver services via telehealth to children who are physically in their homes in the neighboring states of Delaware and Virginia. I had to write to those licensure boards in the other states and request special permission in order for those children to continue with their much needed services. This took weeks and disrupted their plan of care.

As a pediatric private practice owner, it is very difficult here on the Eastern Shore to locate and hire therapists from our area that are trained in pediatrics. This is an issue with all disciplines

including speech-language pathology and physical therapy as well. This leaves the families and children with needs without available services. If this Interstate Professional Licensing Compact for Occupational Therapists were to pass, therapists that are licensed in our neighboring states may be more willing to consider employment in our rural areas of Maryland.

Again, I am so grateful for your support and advocacy in trying to help our families receive their much needed services. Feel free to contact me at any time if I clarify anything or be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dorri Gowe-Lambert, OTR/L". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Dorri Gowe-Lambert, OTR/L

Owner/ Occupational Therapist

Building Bridges Pediatric Therapy Services

# **SB139\_Interstate Occupational Therapy Compact\_Supp**

Uploaded by: Lininger, Brett

Position: FAV



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

January 26, 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 139 – Support**

Dear Chair Pinsky and Members of the Committee:

Kaiser Permanente is pleased to support SB 139 – “Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensure 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.<sup>1</sup> 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 welcomes this legislation as our organization employs Occupational Therapists 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 form of therapy.

We also believe SB 139 will be necessary as we emerge to a post – pandemic state due to the rapidly changing nature of the healthcare industry and the need to address a myriad of diseases. These ailments include but are not limited to birth injuries or birth defects, traumatic brain or spinal cord injuries and other orthopedic injuries as well as learning deficiencies, developmental delays, mental health challenges and chronic diseases such as cerebral palsy and multiple sclerosis. With an aging population, it is essential to establish a sustained means of flexibility for occupational therapists to practice interstate care.

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

---

<sup>1</sup> 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.

Kaiser Permanente  
Comments on SB 139  
January 26, 2021

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wayne D. Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping 'W' and 'D'.

Wayne D. Wilson  
Vice President, Government Programs and External Relations  
Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Mid-Atlantic States, Inc.

# **MRHA SB139 Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensu**

Uploaded by: Orosz, Samantha

Position: FAV





## **Statement of Maryland Rural Health Association**

To the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

January 26, 2021

Senate Bill 139 Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact

### **POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, Senator Carozza, Senator Beidle, and members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, the Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA) is in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 139 Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact.

MRHA supports this legislation that facilitates the entrance of Maryland occupational therapists into the Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact. Further, MRHA supports the general purpose of this compact in that it improves the public's access to occupational therapy services and improves on data management practices necessary to maintain this compact.

According to Maryland law, "many rural communities in the State face a host of difficult challenges relating to... inadequate access to quality health care and other services" (West's Annotated Code of Maryland, State Finance and Procurement § 2-207.8b). The formation of this compact would positively impact rural Marylanders access to quality occupational health services while promoting health equity among rural and non-rural populations across the state. Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, rural Marylanders face unique barriers to equitable and quality health services. The integration of more occupational therapists 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](mailto:larawilson@mdruralhealth.org), 410-693-6988*

# **SB 139- Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensure**

Uploaded by: Witten, Jennifer

Position: FAV



Maryland  
Hospital Association

January 26, 2021

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

Re: Letter of Support- Senate Bill 139- Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensure 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 139. Maryland hospitals support measures that strengthen our health care workforce. Streamlining the process for occupation therapists to be licensed in multiple states could improve access to care, particularly for specialized services.

The American Occupational Therapy Association, in partnership with the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, and the Council of State Governments, created an interstate professional licensing compact for occupational therapy to address licensure portability. The compact is intended to facilitate interstate practice of occupational therapy to improve access to these services. An interstate licensing compact *would not* change state statutes for occupational therapy or the scope of practice.

States that participate in the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact must pass identical legislation. The compact takes effect once 10 states enact legislation. We believe well over 10 states want to join the Compact to fill workforce shortages during the COVID-19 pandemic. We need willing providers to be licensed and ready to serve our communities.

An interstate licensure compact for the occupational therapy profession has proven to:

- Improve consumer access to occupational therapy
- Increase opportunities to practice across state lines (e.g., telehealth, telerehabilitation, distance education)
- Improve continuity of care and preserve and strengthen the state licensure system

This committee passed similar legislation to ensure nurses and doctors have similar compacts, which have been successful. We urge the committee's favorable report on this bill to ensure occupational therapy is accessible for Marylanders.

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

**Sb 139 MBC test final-.pdf**

Uploaded by: Carozza, Senator Mary Beth

Position: FWA

MARY BETH CAROZZA  
Legislative District 38  
Somerset, Wicomico,  
and Worcester Counties

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs  
Committee



Annapolis Office  
James Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Room 314  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3645 • 301-858-3645  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3645  
Fax: 410-841-3006 • 301-858-3006  
MaryBeth.Carozza@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

January 26, 2021

**The Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee**  
**SB 139 Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact**  
**Statement of Support by Bill Sponsor Senator Mary Beth Carozza**

Thank you Chairman Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee for the opportunity to respectfully ask for your support of Senate Bill 139- Interstate Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact. This bill establishes an interstate licensure compact for occupational therapists. This means that occupational therapists can work across state lines, just as long as they are licensed by a member state of the compact. The Maryland General Assembly already has enacted similar legislation for nurses, physicians, and physical therapists.

This bipartisan legislation is a high priority as so many of us regularly hear from providers and constituents in our districts of the need for greater access to health care services. Occupational therapy services are particularly important as these services allow some of our most vulnerable constituents to live more independently. We need to ensure that older adults, children with special needs, and individuals recovering from injuries have the services they need to live as fully as possible.

As I worked with health care providers during COVID-19 during the interim, it was brought to my attention by members of the Maryland Occupational Therapy Association that this interstate occupational therapy licensure compact would have a direct benefit in increasing access to care, especially in districts like mine which are bordered by states, Delaware to the north, and Virginia to the south. Occupational therapists are critical health care providers. They help people maintain as much independence as possible, including older adults in long-term care facilities, people living with injuries to adapt to living at home, and students with disabilities to be productive in school.

Many of our districts are hard hit by health care workforce shortages, especially in the rural parts of the state. Our hospitals, schools, long-term care facilities, and community providers need more flexibility in recruiting qualified health care providers to provide both in-person and telehealth services.

Licensure compacts offer an important pathway to ensuring our health care facilities and providers have a sufficient number of qualified providers, making it easier for licensed health care practitioners from neighboring states to work in our hospitals and programs in our communities. The Compact also would support military spouses. Those military spouses who are health care practitioners would not have the burden of obtaining a new license every time they move to a different state.

This bill continues our committee's important work on telehealth. I supported and appreciated having the opportunity to work with Vice Chair Kagan on her emergency telehealth bill – Senate Bill 402 Health Care Practitioners – Telehealth and Shortage, which was one of the few bills that was signed into law by Governor Hogan, rather than just allowing it to go into effect. During the deliberations of the telehealth bill, Senator Kagan encouraged me to work on an amendment that underscored the importance of interstate compacts.

Specifically, the amendment included legislative intent that the Governor “facilitate the joining of the State with adjacent states and jurisdictions in interstate compacts regulating health care practitioners to improve patient access to health care practitioners in state communities experiencing a health care practitioner shortage.” This amendment laid the groundwork for the introduction of this Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact bill before you today.

Telehealth is an incredible innovation, and it has helped us ensure access to health care during the pandemic. In looking to the future, we need to create an avenue for telehealth providers to “cross State lines” and provide services virtually.

I am pleased to report that there is broad support for the bill with the Maryland Occupational Therapy Association, the Board of Occupational Therapy Practice, and the Maryland Hospital Association.

My panel today will explain a little more background about the development of the compact and how this compact will support access in all of our communities. I will just mention that I have also included a set of amendments in my testimony package. These amendments are entirely technical, as compact laws need to be consistent across states.

I respectfully ask my colleagues on the Senate Educational, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee for a favorable report of Senate Bill 139.

Thank you for your kind consideration.