

SUPPORT
HB 425 Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Compact

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My name is Lorraine Diana, Certified Family Nurse Practitioner, practicing in Maryland for 41 years.

Our nation faces pressing health care challenges—an aging and more diverse population, more people with more chronic conditions, millions more uninsured, rising costs, and a shortage of providers. We can help address some of these challenges by maximizing the use of advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) to tackle health care challenges in access, quality, and cost.

The APRN Compact would streamline access and provide additional choices to patients and families by cutting red tape so APRNs can more easily deliver care across state lines. The APRN Compact also promotes safety and quality. It codifies uniform standards, ensures that states have the authority to enforce public protection at the state level, and makes it easier to exchange information among member states when issues arise.

The APRN Compact will enhance and improve health care access in rural and inner-city communities across Maryland, supporting patients and the family caregivers that help keep their loved ones safe and independent in the community. The APRN Compact is also a commonsense way to facilitate greater telehealth options making it easier for patients to receive care when and where they need it.

Health care provider shortages hit older residents hard. Older adults sometimes lack the ability or resources to get to their appointments because of mobility issues, long travel distances to a provider, and wait times for appointments. This risks their health and adds unnecessary stress to family caregivers. Once implemented, the APRN Compact would encourage APRNs to provide care both in-person or through telehealth technologies in multiple states, connecting patients and their family caregivers with qualified primary care. APRNs are a highly valued and integral part of the health care system and a crucial source of support for family caregivers. They are registered nurses with a masters or doctoral level education trained to provide advanced health care services, including primary and preventative care.

Opponents of this APRN Compact have no real solutions to the work force shortages Maryland is facing. The Compact will help move Maryland in a positive direction as we move into the future of healthcare.

Moreover, the APRN Compact can help residents quickly access lifesaving services during natural disasters, weather emergencies, or a public health crisis. As the COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated, there is a need for state-based APRN license portability during a health care crisis to help states secure surge capacity and save lives when local needs exceed local health care supply. Our participation in the APRN Compact would complement Maryland's participation in the enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact (eNLC or "RN Compact") and allow patients to benefit fully from the array of services APRNs could provide across state lines. Much like the RN Compact, the APRN Compact would also help military families during the relocation process, if the military spouse is an APRN.

We believe this policy change will improve patient access to care, facilitate expanded opportunities for telehealth, improve health outcomes, and reduce costs.

I ask for a favorable report on HB 425.

Remember, this is a voluntary license! APRNs who don't want this multistate license do not have to obtain one. Please allow the APRNs who DO want a multistate license the opportunity to obtain one.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Lorraine Diana, MS, CRNP

Legislative Co Chair, The Maryland Academy of Advanced Practice Clinicians

3152 Eutaw Forest Dr, Waldorf, MD 20603

Ldianaart@aol.com