



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

Statement of CAPT Lynn Nash
HB 425 – Advance Practice Registered Nurse Compact
February 6, 2024

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee:

On behalf of the Maryland Military Coalition and as its Communications Director, I am here to testify on behalf of this bill, as well as answer any questions that you might have. For the record, my name is CAPT (R) Lynn Nash. I am a nurse and as a healthcare professional, I understand the challenges of moving my professional license every time I had a change of station move. I started my uniformed services career as a military spouse and then went on to serve for over 30 years on active duty in both the U.S. Army and Public Health Service.

HB 425 is a common-sense approach to improving license portability and employment, especially for our service families. The Advance Practice Nurse Compact itself is sponsored and funded by the **Department of Defense**, along with the **Council of State Governments**. It is **endorsed by 15 organizations including the National League for Nursing and the National Military Family Association**.

Here are some statistics that support why this bill is necessary—all are referenced in my written testimony:

- The average military family **moves every 2-3 years**. For military spouses, these frequent relocations mean major disruptions in their careers.
- Fifty percent (**50%**) of **active-duty spouses work in fields that require an occupational license** and each state and territory have their own process—that's 55 different sets of rules.
- Every time a service family moves, the spouse often spends thousands of hours (and \$\$\$) to continue their career, often going through a burdensome process to re-license.
- The **average time to look and find a job is 19 weeks OR \$12,374 per year in lost wages** trying to relicense and/or find work in the new state.
- The unemployment rate for **military spouses is 22%** - a figure that hasn't changed since 2015. **This is 3 to 6 times greater than the national average**, even though they often have more experience and education.

HB425 – Advance Practice Registered Nurse Compact - **Favorable**

- That is why the Department of Defense sees licensure as a **MAJOR issue** that negatively influences reenlistment decisions and the military's ability to recruit and retain service members. That is why **Department of Defense has supported similar legislation for over 16 years** because they see the portability of licensure as a **readiness** issue.

The purpose of this compact is to allow an advanced practice registered nurse to hold one multistate license with a privilege to practice in all other compact states without having to go through the burdensome and expensive task of re-licensing. The Compact preserves the regulatory authority of States to protect public health and safety through the current system of State licensure, and it lowers expenses and gets the applicant back to work sooner – a real benefit to our service families. Currently **Delaware, North Dakota and Utah** have enacted legislation. In addition to Maryland, there is legislation proposed in Arizona and South Dakota. The cost to implement this bill is minimal.

This bill is **DIFFERENT** from the **Veterans Auto and Education Improvement Act of 2022** (HR7939), which the President signed into federal law on January 5, 2023. Section 705A of the Act, “Portability of Professional Licenses of Servicemembers and Their Spouses” addresses “**covered licenses**” which provides a mechanism and “states covered license shall be considered valid at a similar scope of practice and in the discipline applied for in the jurisdiction of such new residency for the duration of such military orders”. The law:

- Amends Title VII of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. 4021 et seq.)
- Applies licensing reciprocity between states to all professions except the practice of law

Here in Maryland, a service spouse applying under the Act is issued a letter of endorsement, not an actual Maryland license. The [Maryland Department of Labor’s webpage](#) which states “**Please be advised that this is NOT an application for permanent licensure or certification in the State of Maryland. Rather, this is an application for an official letter of recognition that will allow you to practice**”. Many inspection organizations, such as the Joint Committee on the Accreditation of Hospitals, do not regard an endorsement as meeting the requirements for an in-state or compact license, creating issues for the spouse and employer. Holding a multi-state compact license avoids this complication.

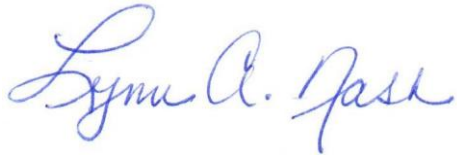
The Maryland Military Coalition is a non-partisan organization of 21 Veteran organizations representing over 150,000 Maryland uniformed services men and women and their families -- almost half of the 355,000 veterans in the State.

The Maryland Military Coalition (MMC) **strongly supports HB 034 – Social Work Licensure Compact and asks for a favorable report.**

HB425 – Advance Practice Registered Nurse Compact - **Favorable**

The Coalition wants to again thank Delegate Rosenberg for this very important legislation.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lynn A. Nash". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lynn A. Nash, PhD, RN, PHCNS-BC, FAAN
CAPT (R), U.S. Public Health Service
Communications Director

Member Organizations, Maryland Military Coalition

James P. Monahan
Air Force Sergeants Association

John P. May
American Military Society

Elwood R. Raphael Gray
American Minority Veterans Research Project

W. W.
Association of the United States Navy

Lynn A. Dask
Commissioned Officers Association of the
US Public Health Service

Wilbur B. Fisher
Disabled American Veterans

Seldon Freedberg
Distinguished Flying Cross Association

Phyllis J. Collins
Fleet Reserve Association

Seldon Freedberg
Jewish War Veterans of the USA

Steve L. Brooker
Maryland Air National Guard Retirees'
Association

Emmett R. Robert
Maryland Veterans Chamber of Commerce

Robert F. Winton
Military Officers Association of America

Charles E. Spahr
Military Order of the Purple Heart

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Montford Point Marines of America

M. L. Messer
National Association for Black Veterans

Michael P. Hays
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association

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NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers

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Reserve Organization of America

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