



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

18 February 2025

**HB45 – Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact**

Madame Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 45.

Health professions require occupational licensure to ensure competency among providers, and to provide accountability for their patients. Different states have different processes to apply for licensure, which presents a challenge for health professionals who travel frequently; lengthy application times and duplicative fees make it less likely that frequently-traveling professionals will be willing to get licensed to provide services in a given state. This hits especially hard for professionals who have family in the military, which requires frequent relocations between States.

In response to burdens of licensure applications between States, the Department of Defense began collaborating with the Council of State Governments (CSG), the National Center for Interstate Compacts (NCIC), and stakeholders from different health professions in 2016 to create a series of health occupational licensure compacts<sup>1</sup> to ensure health professionals in military families or who otherwise travel frequently can benefit from reduced burdens in licensure application between different States. The Committee should be very familiar with this; the Maryland General Assembly has recently passed several compacts including the Audiology and Speech Language Pathology Interstate Compact and the Cosmetology Compact, both of which are the product of collaboration between CSG, the DoD, and stakeholders of each profession. The Dentist and Dental Hygiene Compact is yet another product of CSG's collaboration with NCIC and the DoD, as well as the American Dental Association, the American Dental Hygienists Association, and the American Student Dental Association, with multiple opportunities for more stakeholder input over the course of five years. HB45 calls for Maryland to become the 11<sup>th</sup> State to join this compact for dental professionals.

By entering the Dentist and Dental Hygiene Compact, dentists and dental hygienists licensed in Maryland can apply for a Compact Privilege through an Interstate Compact Commission to practice in any compact state without having to apply for individual licenses in other Compact States. Conversely, a licensed dental professional from another State who passed the Compact can practice in Maryland. Dentists and Hygienists must pass a background check to participate in the Compact, and a streamlined process through the Compact Commission stipulates that States must share disciplinary action quickly with other

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<sup>1</sup> [https://compacts.csg.org/our-work/#:::text=Interstate%20compacts%20provide%20the%20most,have%20been%20enacted%20by%20states.&text=The%20Department%20of%20Defense%20\(DoD,interstate%20compacts%20for%20occupational%20licensure.&text=NCIC%20provides%20support%20services%20to,Assistants%20and%20Psychology%20Interjurisdictional%20Compacts.&text=With%20funding%20support%20from%20the,benefit%20a%20general%20state%20audience.](https://compacts.csg.org/our-work/#:::text=Interstate%20compacts%20provide%20the%20most,have%20been%20enacted%20by%20states.&text=The%20Department%20of%20Defense%20(DoD,interstate%20compacts%20for%20occupational%20licensure.&text=NCIC%20provides%20support%20services%20to,Assistants%20and%20Psychology%20Interjurisdictional%20Compacts.&text=With%20funding%20support%20from%20the,benefit%20a%20general%20state%20audience.)

member States, ensuring that compact participants are being held to stringent standards of care. The State Dental Board retains authority over final disciplinary action, and Compact participants are held to existing State law with regards to practice. The structure of this bill provides a robust system of licensure compatibility from State to State, while maintaining high standards for patient safety.

10 States have already passed the Dentist and Dental Hygiene Compact: Washington, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Colorado, Kansas, Ohio, Maine, Tennessee, and neighboring Virginia. 15 additional states are considering legislation to join this compact, including Pennsylvania and New Jersey.<sup>2</sup> No other dental compact has been adopted by any other State.

As observed in the Fiscal and Policy Note, the State Board of Dental Examiners can implement participation in the Dentist and Dental Hygiene Compact using existing resources. No additional costs to the state are anticipated.

There is only one Dental and Dental Hygienists Compact that has been adopted by a growing number of states. Participating in the Dentist and Dental Hygiene Compact will increase public access to more qualified, licensed dentists and dental hygienists, and allow greater flexibility for military families and other traveling professionals. For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on HB45.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://ddhcompact.org/compact-map/>