



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of House Bill 118: Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact
January 29, 2025

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and esteemed members of the Ways and Means Committee, I humbly come before you today to offer testimony in favor of **House Bill 118: Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact**. This compact, developed by the Council of State Governments, Department of Defense, and the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification, presents an innovative solution that complements our State's efforts to address teacher shortages in Maryland, while providing a direct benefit to military families and other families relocating to Maryland for new opportunities. It is also a priority of the Maryland Legislative Black Caucus, as it could diversify and strengthen Maryland's teaching workforce, addressing Pillar 2 of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future: High-Quality and Diverse Teachers and Leaders.

Licensed professionals, such as teachers, who move from state to state often struggle with the process of obtaining licenses in their new state. No group is more affected by frequent moves than military families, who are on average reassigned to a new station every 2-3 years. The time and expense associated with obtaining a new license creates an immense financial burden on these families, while impeding Maryland's efforts to recruit new teachers.

On January 5, 2023, President Biden signed the Veterans Auto and Education Improvement Act of 2022, which added the "Portability of Professional Licenses of Service Members and their Spouses" section to the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. This provision calls for states to ensure that servicemembers and their spouses are able to use their professional licenses and certificates in new jurisdictions when they must relocate due to military orders. **House Bill 118** is the answer to this call by moving Maryland into the **Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact (ITMC)**.

This bill also answers the call to seek more diverse licensed teachers in our Maryland workforce. One-third of Maryland's students are Black, but only 20% of Maryland teachers are, and less than 30 percent of Maryland's teachers are teachers of color. As a national leader in education reform, Maryland is uniquely poised to attract licensed teachers from across the ITMC's participating states who are inspired by our transformative efforts to improve educational outcomes. By expanding access to high-quality educators from diverse backgrounds, **House Bill 118** provides the possibility that our students could benefit from a teacher workforce reflective of our state's rich diversity.

Maryland continues to face significant challenges in staffing classrooms with licensed teachers. According to the Joint Briefing on the Blueprint for Maryland's Future before the Ways and Means and Appropriations Committees (01/22/25), one-third of new teachers hired in Maryland are not licensed before entering the classroom. That means that 1 in 10 classrooms in our state are currently staffed by either a substitute or unlicensed teacher. This is particularly concerning in critical areas like special education and early childhood education which are suffering even more severe shortages.

By streamlining licensure for out-of-state teachers, **House Bill 118** directly addresses these shortages. The compact ensures that Maryland schools can draw from a broader pool of licensed, qualified educators, alleviating pressure on current teachers and enabling them to focus on what matters most: teaching, mentoring, meeting with families, and supporting students.

Thirteen states are currently part of the ITMC (Pennsylvania, Delaware, Kentucky, Florida, Alabama, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Washington, and Oregon). With our neighbors Pennsylvania and Delaware now members, Maryland must join the Compact to remain competitive in the region. **House Bill 118** ensures that Maryland continues to attract top-tier talent while setting a standard for educational excellence. I urge a favorable report on **House Bill 118**.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bernice Minkus-North". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Bernice" is written in a larger, more prominent script, followed by "Minkus-North" in a slightly smaller, more compact script. The signature is positioned on a light gray rectangular background.