



Wes Moore | Governor
Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor
Harry Coker, Jr. | Acting Secretary of Commerce

DATE: February 24, 2025
BILL NO: House Bill 959
BILL TITLE: School Psychologist Interstate Licensure Compact
COMMITTEE: House Ways and Means
POSITION: Support

The Maryland Department of Commerce (Commerce) supports House Bill 959 – School Psychologist Interstate Licensure Compact.

Bill Summary:

House Bill 959 improves license portability for school psychology licenses by establishing the School Psychologist Interstate Licensure Compact. The Compact would require member states to share necessary information with each other, to establish a process for applicants to obtain a home state license, and to grant equivalent licenses to licensees with home state licenses from other member states. The bill would also establish the School Psychologist Interstate Licensure Compact Commission to maintain the Compact, provide ways for member states to oversee the Compact and resolve disputes, and provide ways to amend or withdraw from the Compact.

Background:

Maryland currently has several pathways for in-state applicants to obtain a license. Licensees typically have to complete a Master’s degree, complete coursework in special education and an internship in school psychology, and receive qualifying test scores. These requirements are already in line with the interstate standards proposed in the bill and thus would not substantially change.

Maryland has licensing options for out-of-state licensees and accepts the existing Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) credential. Even so, obtaining a Maryland license is difficult for out-of-state school psychologists. Maryland does not have any formal compact or reciprocity agreements with other states. Out-of-state NCSP certified psychologists and those holding out-of-state licenses must still reapply for licensure in Maryland and complete several verifications before they can receive their Maryland license and begin work.

Rationale:

Passage of this bill will improve access to licensure and license portability for school psychologists. The Compact will be an addition to several existing compacts improving license portability across several occupations. License portability is very important to the military community and may affect future Department of Defense (DoD) basing decisions. In FY 2021, Maryland’s military installations contributed \$61.4B to our economy in payroll and expenditures. With 72% of military families living off-base in our communities, this bill will ease the employment of military families and contribute to the overall quality of life for all Marylanders by increasing access to licensed school psychologists.

In addition to license portability, DoD strongly encourages states to adopt interstate compacts for occupational licensure. The Council of State Governments is partnering with DoD and the National Association of School Psychologists to support passage of school psychologist licensure compacts nationwide. To date, legislation has passed in two states and has been introduced in nine others, including Maryland. Passage of HB 959 will keep Maryland competitive as a military family-friendly state and generally for license portability.

Commerce respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 959.