



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0584-2023, **Version:** *

Res. No. 584

Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, legislation to enter the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, the Nurse Licensure Compact, and the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact, to enhance the portability of medical and mental health providers to become licensed in multiple participating states.

By Council Members Lee, Powers, Rivera, Bottcher, Riley, Louis, Menin, Ayala, Brewer, Ung, Abreu, Avilés, Velázquez, Hudson, Cabán, Hanif and Gennaro (in conjunction with the Brooklyn Borough President)

Whereas, According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, the rapid increased use of telehealth services during the COVID-19 pandemic played a critical role in meeting the needs of mental and physical health care in America; and

Whereas, Researchers in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found that telehealth visits significantly increased for Medicare beneficiaries as a result of waivers being expanded to include in-home visits during the pandemic due to social distancing concerns; and

Whereas, According to the Journal of the American Medical Association, during the pandemic, all medical disciplines suffered severe shortages of qualified personnel nationwide, and more than one in five healthcare workers considered reducing their hours or quitting the workforce entirely due to being overwhelmed by stress and the inability to maintain a work-life balance; and

Whereas, Staffing shortages continue to threaten the medical workforce in New York City, as evidenced by the nurses strike at Mount Sinai Hospital in Manhattan and Montifiore Medical Center in the Bronx, which began on January 4, 2023, and ended January 12, 2023, after both hospitals agreed to add nurses and improve working conditions; and

Whereas, A federal omnibus bill passed in December 2022 included critical funding to allow Staten

Island University Hospital to retain 300 residency slots among “a national physician shortage” complicated by the triple-demic of COVID-19, influenza, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), which overwhelmed hospitals in late 2022; and

Whereas, The Association of American Medical Colleges projects an estimated loss of 124,000 physicians in both primary and specialty care by the year 2034, signaling the need to implement innovative ways of providing care, including telehealth visits, to ensure necessary service delivery; and

Whereas, While federal standards govern medical training and the U.S. Medical Licensing Examination, each state has its own licensing board and, with limited exceptions for emergency consultations, all physicians must be licensed by the state in which they choose to practice, which serves as a barrier to providing telemedicine in more than one state; and

Whereas, The Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC) is an agreement allowing physicians to become licensed in multiple participating states, thereby expanding the portability of their medical licensure in order to provide increased medical services; and

Whereas, The Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) is a multistate license issued by a nurse’s Primary State of Residence that allows a nurse to practice in other NLC states and territories without obtaining additional licenses and, similar to a driver’s license, is recognized across state lines; and

Whereas, The Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT) is an interstate agreement designed to allow licensed psychologists to practice tele-psychology and conduct temporary in-person practices across state boundaries as a means to provide services to a wider patient population; and

Whereas, New York State Senate bill S.2216, introduced by State Senator Thomas F. O’Mara, and its companion bill A.4860, introduced by New York State Assembly Member Philip A. Palmesano, would enact the IMLC to simplify the processes of allowing physicians to become licensed in multiple participating states and enhance the portability of medical licenses; and

Whereas, New York State Assembly bill A.3391, introduced by Assembly Member Daniel J. O’Donnell,

would enact the IMLC and the NLC to strengthen access to healthcare by providing a streamlined process to become a licensed healthcare provider in multiple states; and

Whereas, New York State Assembly bill A.4528, introduced by Assembly Member Brian D. Miller, would enact the PSYPACT, the recognition of emergency medical services personnel licensure interstate compact, and the counseling compact model legislation, which would serve to expand the mobility of the psychology and counseling workforce; and

Whereas, Telehealth services proved invaluable to New York City residents during the pandemic, and digital medical appointments continue to serve as a safe, convenient, and innovative way to access medical and behavioral healthcare for individuals who are unable or prefer not to attend in-person healthcare visits; and

Whereas, The need for medical health professionals to have greater portability and flexibility to practice in more than one state is projected to increase in the future; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, legislation to enter the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, the Nurse Licensure Compact, and the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact, to enhance the portability of medical and mental health providers to become licensed in multiple participating states.

LS #11724
03/29/23
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