

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5460

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As of February 3, 2019

**Title:** An act relating to the multistate nurse licensure compact.

**Brief Description:** Joining the nurse licensure compact.

**Sponsors:** Senators Cleveland, Bailey, Keiser, Conway, O'Ban, Liias, Kuderer and Short.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long Term Care: 2/01/19.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Brief Summary of Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enters Washington into the Interstate Nursing Licensure Compact.</li></ul>
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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG TERM CARE

**Staff:** Greg Attanasio (786-7410)

**Background:** Nurse Licensure. The Nursing Commission is responsible for licensure, license renewal, and discipline of registered nurses (RN) and licensed practical nurses (LPN). To receive an RN or LPN license, an applicant must:

- successfully complete an approved nursing education program;
- complete seven clock hours of AIDS education;
- successfully pass a licensure examination; and
- submit the required documentation.

An RN or LPN who is licensed in another state or territory of the United States that meets all other requirements for licensure in Washington may receive a license without examination.

Interstate Nursing Licensure Compact. The Interstate Nursing Licensure Compact (Compact) is a proposal to create a system for expediting the licensure for RNs and LPNs already licensed by another state. States must enact model legislation in order to adopt the Compact and become a member to the licensure agreement. As of January 2019, twenty-nine states have enacted the Compact and become party to the agreement.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Summary of Bill:** Licensure Process. Each home state licensing board or commission may issue a multistate license to a qualified applicant residing in that state. The applicant must meet the state's qualifications for licensure, must submit to a criminal background check, including providing fingerprints or other biometric information necessary to complete the check, and must have passed an approved examination. Each license holder shall be eligible to renew their license provided that they continue to meet all qualifications, including having no disqualifying disciplinary or criminal history.

Each party state to the Compact must participate in a licensure information system and provide information to the system on licensure and disciplinary history of all licensed RNs and LPNs in the state. When an applicant applies for a multistate license, the home state must check the licensure information system to determine if the applicant holds or has ever held a multistate license issued by another state, is participating in an alternative licensing program, and whether the applicant has any disciplinary history. A nurse may only hold one multistate license at a time and upon moving to a new primary state of residence, must apply for licensure in their new home state.

Disciplinary Action. Only the licensing commission of the home state that issued the multistate license may take disciplinary or other adverse action against an RN's or LPN's privilege to practice in that state. The home state must give the same effect to reported conduct received from a remote state as it would if the conduct occurred in the home state. If a licensed nurse moves to a new state during the course of an investigation, the home state may complete the investigation and take appropriate action. If the home state takes disciplinary or other adverse action, the nurse's multistate licensure privilege to work in all other party states must be deactivated until the encumbrance has been removed. The home state must report all adverse actions to the Compact's licensure information system.

Interstate Commission. An interstate commission of nurse licensure compact administrators is established. The head of the licensing board or commission of each state, or their designee, shall be a member of the interstate commission. The interstate commission may promulgate rules and bylaws for the Compact and each member shall have one vote.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 29, 2019.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: Similar compacts have proven effective for issuing expedited licenses for other professions. Easing licensure is a quality of life issue for military personnel and their spouses. Of the ten states with the largest military population, Washington is one of three states that have not adopted the Compact. Adoption would help address the readiness of military medial forces by allowing more opportunities to train and learn in the community. It would also ease the stress related to gaps in employment and applying for new licenses that are reoccurring problems for military families.

CON: There is already an expedited process for nurse licensure in Washington so the Compact is not needed. There are concerns around the authority granted to the Compact Commission and there is more work to be done to understand how the Compact works and how it will affect licensure in Washington.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Annette Cleveland, Prime Sponsor; Jonathan Seib, National Council State Boards of Nursing; Todd Mielke, CEO, Greater Spokane Inc.; Tammie Perreault, Department of Defense; Michaelle Guerrero, Commander, 92d Medical Group; Jehan Jones, Military Spouse.

CON: Melissa Johnson, Washington State Nurses Association.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.