

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1640

As Passed House:

March 5, 2025

Title: An act relating to placing licenses issued in chapters 18.71B and 18.71C RCW under the authority of the uniform disciplinary act.

Brief Description: Placing licenses issued in chapters 18.71B and 18.71C RCW under the authority of the uniform disciplinary act.

Sponsors: Representatives Zahn, Bronoske, Ormsby and Thai; by request of Washington State Medical Commission.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 2/12/25, 2/21/25 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/5/25, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Subjects licenses issued through the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact and the Physician Assistant Licensure Compact to the provisions of the Uniform Disciplinary Act (UDA).
- Provides that the Medical Commission is the disciplining authority for purposes of the UDA for licenses issued through these Compacts.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 18 members: Representatives Bronoske, Chair; Lekanoff, Vice Chair; Schmick, Ranking Minority Member; Caldier, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Marshall, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Davis, Engell, Low, Macri, Manjarrez, Obras, Parshley, Shavers, Simmons, Stonier, Stuebe, Thai and Tharinger.

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

Staff: Kim Weidenaar (786-7120)

Background:

Uniform Disciplinary Act.

The Uniform Disciplinary Act (UDA) governs credentialed health professionals credentialed by the Department of Health (DOH) or one of the health professions' boards or commissions, such as the Medical Commission (Commission). Depending on the profession, the disciplining authority may be the Secretary of Health (Secretary) or a board or commission. Under the UDA, a disciplining authority may take action against a license holder for a variety of reasons, including misrepresentation or fraud, unlicensed practice, and the mental or physical inability to practice skillfully or safely. A disciplining authority may initiate a disciplinary action after receiving a complaint or if the disciplining authority has reason to believe that the licensee engaged in unprofessional conduct. The Commission is the disciplining authority for physicians licensed under chapter 18.71 RCW, physician assistants (PAs), and anesthesiologist assistants.

The Interstate Medical Licensure Compact.

In 2017 Washington enacted the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (Medical Compact), which established a process for the issuance of expedited licenses for physicians and osteopathic physicians and surgeons who are fully licensed in one member state to receive a license in another member state. The Medical Compact is governed by a commission that includes two representatives from each member state.

Physician Assistant Licensure Compact.

In 2024 Washington enacted the Physician Assistant Licensure Compact (PA Compact), which is an agreement between states facilitating the practice of PAs across state lines among states participating in the PA Compact. A state becomes a member of the PA Compact by enacting legislation allowing a remote state PA to apply for compact privilege to practice in the enacting state, either in person or by telemedicine, upon payment of a compact privilege fee and verification of other requirements.

Summary of Bill:

Licenses issued through the Medical Compact and the PA Compact are added to the providers subject to the UDA. The Commission is the disciplining authority for purposes of the UDA over licenses issued through the Medical Compact and PA Compact.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The government works better when we all work together. Washington's population continues to grow, and the state faces workforce shortages. This bill relates to interstate compacts that allow physicians and PAs from other states to practice in Washington. Oversight of these medical professionals is also very important. This bill creates consistency by including these compacts into the UDA that governs the credentialing of health professionals.

The Commission licenses and regulates 35,000 physicians and PAs. This bill is necessary to ensure that licenses issued through these compacts are appropriately included in the UDA. This bill closes unintended gaps and creates continuity and consistency in regulation. It is critical that the law provides clear applicability to all providers.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Janice Zahn, prime sponsor; Taylor Bacharach-Nixon, Washington Medical Commission; and Stephanie Mason, Washington Medical Commission

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.