

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1640

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, March 21, 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: Passed House: 3/5/25, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 3/20/25, 3/21/25.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adds 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.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Rohan Bhattacharjee (786-7534)

Background: Uniform Disciplinary Act. The Uniform Disciplinary Act (UDA) governs health professionals credentialed by the Department of Health 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 or a board or commission.

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.

Under 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 disciplinary action may be initiated after receiving a complaint or if there is reason to believe that the licensee engaged in unprofessional conduct.

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

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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: The bill is a technical fix to align disciplinary rules for out-of-state physicians and PAs working under interstate compacts. These compacts are essential for maintaining health care workforce levels.

The interstate compact system allows Washington to keep pace with modern licensing solutions. This bill closes a legal gap by ensuring compact-licensed professionals fall under the Uniform Disciplinary Act.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Janice Zahn, Prime Sponsor; Taylor Bacharach-Nixon, Washington Medical Commission.

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