



April 11, 2023

Representative Jesse Sumner, Chair
House Labor and Commerce Committee

Re: House Bill 149, Nursing: Licensure; Multistate Compact

Dear Chair Sumner, and members of the House Labor and Commerce Committee,

The Alaska Chamber (the Chamber) writes in support of House Bill 149, an Act relating to the licensure of nursing professionals; relating to a multistate nurse licensure compact; and providing for an effective date.

The Alaska Chamber was founded in 1953 and is Alaska's largest statewide business advocacy organization. Our mission is to promote a healthy business environment in Alaska. The Chamber has more than 700 members and represents businesses of all sizes and industries from across the state, representing 58,000 Alaskan workers and \$4.6 billion in wages.

The Chamber has a formal policy position to support joining the multistate Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC). The NLC is an agreement between states that allows nurses to have a single license to practice in any state that is a member of the compact. There are currently 39 states and jurisdictions in the compact.

Alaska is projected to have the highest nurse vacancies in the United States by 2030 with over 5,000 openings and a 22% shortfall. Alaska already cannot keep up with demand, which requires filling 6,300 job openings in healthcare each year, including over 1,500 nurse openings. By making it more efficient for nurses to obtain licensure in Alaska, the NLC will increase the pool of qualified candidates to fill critical vacancies.

The healthcare sector leads all other job sectors in Alaska in retaining nonresidents as resident workers in our state. Joining the NLC will reduce delays in the licensure process, which are a known barrier for nurses who are looking to start their careers in or move to Alaska. Alaska is also home to thousands of military members on assignment, many with spouses and family who are nurses. By joining the NLC it will help these individuals seamlessly transition into our healthcare workforce.

Lastly, Alaska maintains local control, the Alaska Board of Nursing will maintain full control of licensure, discipline, scope of practice, and authority to suspend unqualified nurses in Alaska.

In closing, the Chamber supports HB149 and encourages swift passage of this straightforward and good for business bill. Thank you for considering the Alaska Chamber's comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kati Capozzi'.

Kati Capozzi
President and CEO



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