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Major General Michael T. Venerdi
The Adjutant General and Director of
Emergency Management & Homeland Security

Laura Kelly, Governor

February 5, 2025

Committee on Health and Human Services
Kansas House of Representatives
Chairman Will Carpenter
Attn: David Long, Committee Assistant
State Capitol, Room 112-N
300 SW 10th Ave
Topeka, KS 66612

Name: Lt. Col. Keith Marshall
Organization: The Adjutant General's Department
Contact: keith.marshall.1@us.af.mil, 785-646-0011
Bill: HB 2068, Enacting the Cosmetology Compact
Position: Proponent
Type: In-person
Date: February 5, 2025

Dear Chairman Carpenter and Members of the Committee,

The Adjutant General's Department respectfully submits the following testimony for the hearing on House Bill 2068, Enacting the Cosmetology Compact, on February 5, 2025. My legislative liaison, Lt. Col. Keith Marshall, will testify on my behalf.

The topic of this bill is a priority of the Department of Defense: to implement the Military Spouse Licensing Relief Actⁱ to help military spouses maintain professional and financial stability.ⁱⁱ As National Guardsmen, we typically don't move as frequently as our Active Duty counterparts, but our personnel do have to move on occasion. We stand in support of this bill for National Guard and all military families.

Military spouses face significant employment challenges, with an unemployment rate consistently around 21%.ⁱⁱⁱ This rate is notably higher than the national average, indicating persistent difficulties in securing employment. Additionally, nearly half of military spouses (45%) consider themselves underemployed, working in positions below their education or experience levels.^{iv} These employment hurdles not only affect the immediate financial stability of military families but also have long-term economic implications, including reduced retirement savings and diminished career progression.^v

Implementing interstate licensing compacts is one step we can take to remove employment and economic barriers for our military families. These compacts play a vital role in supporting military families by easing the transition for spouses and professionals who require state-specific licenses to work. These agreements streamline the process of transferring professional licenses across state lines, reducing delays and financial burdens that often accompany frequent relocations. For military spouses who frequently move due to their service member's assignments, licensing compacts provide greater job stability and career continuity, allowing them to maintain employment without lengthy re-certifications or additional coursework. Additionally, these agreements benefit military communities by ensuring continued access to qualified professionals in fields such as healthcare, education, and other areas. By reducing barriers to employment, interstate licensing compacts enhance economic security for military families and contribute to their overall well-being.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter. You are always welcome to reach out to me if you need anything. You may also contact my legislative liaison, Lt. Col. Keith Marshall, at 785-646-0011 or keith.marshall.1@us.af.mil.

MICHAEL T. VENERDI
Major General, Kansas National Guard
The Adjutant General

ⁱ <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/1084>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.militarybenefit.org/get-educated/military-spouse-licensing-relief-act/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://bluestarfam.org/mse-research/>

^{iv} https://www.army.mil/article/277575/navigating_barriers_for_military_spouses_working_overseas

^v <https://www.hiringourheroes.org/resources/hidden-financial-costs-military-spouse-unemployment/>