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

Laura Kelly, Governor

March 4, 2025

Committee on Public Health and Welfare
Kansas Senate
Chairwoman Beverly Gossage
Attn: Suzanne Nelson, Committee Assistant
State Capitol, Room 142-S
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 2070, Enacting Dietician Licensing Compact
Position: Proponent
Type: In-person
Date: March 4, 2025

Dear Chairwoman Gossage and Members of the Committee,

The Adjutant General's Department respectfully submits the following testimony for the hearing on HB 2070, Enacting Dietician Licensing Compact, on March 4, 2025. My legislative liaison, Lt. Col. Keith Marshall, will testify on this bill.

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.

In 2023 President Biden signed into law the Military Spouse Licensing Relief Act. This law intends to provide for licensure portability among all 50 states for service members and military spouse licensed professionals, except for the practice of law.

The National Center for Interstate Compacts assists in collaboration for compact agreements to strengthen economies and protect public health and safety. The center currently oversees compacts in 17 specialties, of which Kansas has passed 9:

- Audiology/Speech Language Pathology. Passed in 2021, [SB77](#)
- Dental and Dental Hygienist. Passed in 2024, [HB2453](#)
- Emergency Medical Services. Passed in 2015, [SB225](#)
- Interstate Teacher Mobility. Passed in 2023, [SB66](#)
- Licensed Professional Counseling. Passed in 2023, [HB2288](#)
- Nurse Licensure. Passed in 2018, [HB2496](#)
- Physical Therapy. Passed in 2021, [SB170](#)
- Psychology Interjurisdictional. Passed in 2021, [SB170](#)
- Social Work. Passed in 2024, [HB2484](#)

Kansas currently does not have licensing compacts in the following areas:

- [Advanced Practice Registered Nurse](#)
- [Cosmetology](#)
- [Dietetic Nutrition](#)
- [Massage Therapy](#)
- [Occupational Therapy](#)
- [Physicians](#)
- [Physician Associates](#)
- [School Psychologists](#)

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/>