



**OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE**  
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MANPOWER AND  
RESERVE AFFAIRS

April 29, 2021

The Honorable Representative Kahle  
Chair, House Health Policy Committee  
P.O. Box 30014  
Lansing, MI 48909

**SUBJ: SB 18- RELATED TO ENTERING PHYSICAL THERAPY LICENSURE COMPACT**

Chair Kahle and members of the committee:

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Defense, I am writing to submit testimony in support of the policy changes expressed in SB 18, as introduced, which addresses licensing issues affecting our service members and their families. My name is James D Rickel and I am the Central Regional Liaison for the Defense-State Liaison Office, operating under the direction of Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Military Community and Family Policy. Our mission is to be a resource to state policymakers as they work to address quality of life issues of military service members and their families.

Licensure issues for both our transitioning military members and their spouses have been a priority for the Department for several years. States are now considering licensure compacts for several occupations. Our office is working with states to approve five (7) occupational licensure compacts in 2021. Along with the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact (PTLC), we are assisting with the Compacts for Psychology (PSYPACT), Emergency Medical Services (REPLICA), Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (ASLP-IC), enhanced Nurse Licensure(eNLC), Licensed Professional Counseling, Occupational License Therapy Compact (OT).

Occupational licensure compacts provide consistent rules that allow licensed members to work in other states through “privilege to practice policies” or to more easily transfer their license to a new state. Benefits of these interstate compacts include:

- Common understanding of standards.
- Mechanisms for states to share authority and responsibility to oversee occupational practice.
- Improved methods for allowing endorsements when members need to transfer a license, primarily based upon changing legal residence.
- Tele-practice opportunities using technology to work across state boundaries.

Twenty (31) states have already enacted legislation and five (8) additional states, to include Michigan, have introduced legislation to join the PTLC. The PTLC allows military spouses to designate a home state for their license and use the “privilege to practice” provision in the compact to work in any other member state without obtaining another license. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of married service members reported that their spouse’s ability to maintain a career impacts their decision to remain in the military and seventy-seven percent (77%) of military spouses report they want or need to work. As our military members and their families move from state to state, the ability for them to quickly gain employment and progress on their chosen career paths is very important.

In closing, let me say that we are grateful for the tremendous efforts that Michigan has historically made to support our military members and their families. We appreciate the opportunity to support the policy reflected in SB 18. We especially thank Senator Dale Zorn for bringing this important policy forward. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you might have.

Sincerely,

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Cc: Senator Dale Zorn