



October 5, 2023

To: House Health Policy Committee Members

RE: SUPPORT HB 4504 and HB 4505 - Physical Therapy Licensure Compact

Dear Representatives Rogers, Whitsett, VanderWall and Members of the House Health Policy Committee,

The Physical Therapy Compact (PT Compact) is an agreement between member states to improve access to physical therapy services for the public by increasing the mobility of eligible physical therapy providers to work in multiple states.

The PT Compact recognizes that all Physical Therapist (PT) and Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) educational programs in the United States must meet all standards set forth by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education. Educational programs do not vary from state to state; they all must meet this national standard.

<https://www.capteonline.org/>

The PT Compact recognizes that all PT and PTA graduates applying for licensure must all successfully pass a national examination that is overseen by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy. <https://www.fsbpt.org/>

The PT Compact helps meet workforce needs, provides greater consumer access to specialty physical therapy care and addresses licensure portability issues for PTs and PTAs. It improves patient access to physical therapy services in the state of Michigan by giving eligible licensees in participating states an easier and faster alternative to traditional licensure, while retaining safeguards to protect the public.

To date, there are 37 member states in the PT Compact. 30 states are currently active member states and are issuing compact licenses. Six states and Washington DC have enacted legislation but have not yet begun to issue licenses. With the exception of Illinois which has also introduced PT Compact legislation, every state that borders Michigan is an active compact state (WI, IN, OH). <https://ptcompact.org/ptc-states>

Licensure Compacts exist for other licensed health professionals. Just two examples:

- Interstate Medical Licensure Compact reports that currently 31 member states, Washington DC and Guam are actively issuing licenses. <https://www.imlcc.org/>
- National Council of State Boards of Nursing reports that 41 member states are actively issuing licenses. <https://www.ncsbn.org/compacts.page>

Having Michigan join the PT Compact would:

- Improve patient access to physical therapy services in Michigan by offering licensees in participating states a more efficient way to obtain a license to practice in multiple states.
- Help connect consumers with the specialized physical therapy services they need.
 - For example, persons with Parkinson Disease have improved outcomes with regular access to physical therapist services yet there are very few therapists in the UP who have specialized training.
 - A compact license may incentivize PTs with specialized skills to expand their practice to Michigan.
- Promote public protection by readily sharing background checks and disciplinary data among member states.
- Provide newly licensed PTs and PTAs who graduate from our Physical Therapy Programs in Michigan an incentive to choose to make Michigan their home state license.
 - They may choose to be travel PTs / PTAs early in their careers and then when it's time to return home, they return to Michigan.
 - Students find it attractive to get their first license in a state that has compact privileges.
- Improve the PT business friendliness perception in Michigan.

- Improve patient access to physical therapy services via telehealth across member states.
- Assist with maintaining safe staffing levels of PT / PTA personnel for healthcare facilities, rather than relying on expensive contract staffing agencies.

Joining the Physical Therapy Compact does NOT:

- Alter the scope of practice for PTs or PTAs in Michigan in any way.
 - PTs and PTAs who have their home license in another state must comply with all Michigan laws and rules for the physical therapy profession when practicing in Michigan via the PT Compact.
- Remove the State of Michigan's authority to discipline those who provide care to Michigan residents.

The US Bureau of Labor Statistics states that the demand for physical therapy will come in part from the aging of Americans who are more likely to experience heart attacks, strokes, mobility related injuries, have chronic conditions such as diabetics, obesity and seek non-opioid approaches to pain management.

The Bureau states that employment of physical therapists is projected to grow 15 percent from 2022 to 2032, much faster than the average for all occupations. Note: Total growth for all occupations is expected to be 3% for the same time period. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/physical-therapists.htm#tab-6>

Those member states that are in the PT Compact have an advantage for staffing healthcare facilities at appropriate levels to keep all patients safe and ensure quality patient care.

Reducing the burden associated with relicensing of military spouses has been a priority for the US Department of Defense (DOD) for several years. The DOD supports Licensing Compacts for many health professionals, including physical therapy providers.

The DOD's Key Message:

Many military spouse professionals must relicense each time they move to a new state with their active-duty spouse. States can facilitate the ability of professionals, including military spouses, to work across state lines by enacting occupational licensure interstate compacts.

<https://download.militaryonesource.mil/StatePolicy/pdfs/2023/discussionpoints-licensingcompacts.pdf>

For military members and their families who move from state to state, the PT Compact gives their spouses the ability to quickly obtain employment in their career path.

When a military spouse can't easily relicense, it damages their career, creates financial instability and hurts the entire military family. <https://www.militaryfamily.org/licensing-certification/>

Here are just a few of the many advocacy groups supporting the PT Compact:

- Federation of State Medical Boards
- The American Telemedicine Association
- Citizen Advocacy Center
- National Association for the Support of Long Term Care

The 37 member states already in the PT Compact clearly demonstrate that the citizens of those states have benefited from having expanded access to safe and effective PT services. The citizens of Michigan deserve the same.

Please SUPPORT HB 4504 and HB 4505 - Physical Therapy Licensure Compact

Sincerely,

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APTA Michigan Chapter Vice President