

**Oregon House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care**

**February 13, 2024**

**TESTIMONY OF Dan Logsdon  
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The National Center for Interstate Compacts  
The Council of State Governments**

Hello, Chairperson Noose and members of the committee, my name is Dan Logsdon, and I am the Director of the National Center for Interstate Compacts (NCIC) at The Council of State Governments (CSG). Thank you for the opportunity to provide supporting testimony for HB 4071 which would establish the Counseling Compact in Oregon.

Currently counselors must obtain an individual license in every state in which they wish to practice. Obtaining this license can take several months, may require finding old transcripts or even course descriptions, and contacting supervisors who no longer work in the field. Practitioners must additionally keep up with differing continuing education requirements from each state, which is a time-consuming process.

The Counseling Compact is a way to mitigate those issues. The Compact allows licensees to obtain a privilege to practice in other member states based on primary source verification of the license and a criminal background check. This is a more widely organized and uniform process than the current patchwork of reciprocity agreements between individual states.

When counselors must spend weeks or months waiting for a license, they cannot spend that time working in their chosen field. The medical field is currently seeing extremely serious workforce shortages, especially for behavioral health professionals, and reducing the number of workers who are in limbo while waiting for a license can help get practitioners working again more quickly.

The compact allows for both in-person and telehealth practice. Telehealth options provided through the compact can help improve continuity of care and provide access to a more diverse practitioner pool.

The Compact currently has 32 member states. Ten more states are considering the Counseling Compact in 2024. Oregon is currently a member of two occupational licensure compacts – The Physical Therapy Compact and the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to the committee. I'm available to answer any questions regarding the Counseling Compact or interstate compact policy.