



February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
Senate Workforce Development Committee

Dear Chair Wobbema, Vice Chair Axtman and all distinguished members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on HB 1035, which adopts the social work licensure compact. My name is Alicia Plemmons, PhD, and I am an assistant professor and co-director of the Knee Regulatory Research Center at West Virginia University. This comment is not submitted on behalf of any party or interest group.

My research studies patient outcomes in terms of safety, quality, cost, and access under different practice agreements. Compacts are a unique solution to workforce mobility problems, and in fact my team has found evidence of beneficial outcomes for similar compacts, such as the interstate medical licensure compact for the physicians<sup>1</sup>, and the enhanced nurse licensure compact for nurses<sup>2</sup>.

While beneficial, piecemeal solutions through compacts have led to several logistical problems attempting to modernize healthcare legislation, develop continuing education programs, and in developing differential licensure systems for each profession.

An alternative, which has found great success in attracting skilled workers, is universal licensing recognition<sup>3</sup>, where all licenses in good standing within other states are recognized. The states which have chosen to address all professions at once, rather than piecemeal, have been more flexible and responsive, bolstering their state workforce and access to safe, high quality, cost effective medical care.

In summary, while this compact does have potential benefits, the research suggests there is a more efficient pathway to beneficial economic outcomes through universal licensing recognition.

Best regards,

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<sup>1</sup> [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=4755497](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4755497)

<sup>2</sup> <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12122-022-09333-2>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0165176522002920>

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