

**2025 SENATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**SB 2146**

# 2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Workforce Development Committee Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

SB 2146  
1/16/2025

Relating to the occupational therapy licensure compact.
---

10:05 a.m. Chairman Wobbema opened the meeting.

Members Present: Chairman Wobbema, Vice-Chairman Axtman, Senator Boschee, Senator Larson, Senator Powers.

### Discussion Topics:

- Available Services
- Reporting process
- Implications in other states

10:05 a.m. Senator Roers testified in favor.

10:07 a.m. Megan Boucher, Occupational Therapist with ND Occupational Therapy Association, testified in favor and submitted testimony #29375.

10:14 a.m. Tim Blasl, president of ND Hospital Association, testified in favor and submitted testimony #29030

10:15 a.m. Jay Sheldon, Strategy and Policy Officer ND National Guard, testified in favor and submitted testimony #29209, #29515

10:18 a.m. Daniel Markels, State Legislative Affairs Manager of American Occupational Therapy Association, testified in favor and submitted testimony #29276

10:20 a.m. Carl Sims, Deputy Director for the National Center for Interstate Compacts at The Council of State Governments, testified in neutral - #29289

10:26 a.m. Senator Axtman moved a Do Pass.

10:26 a.m. Senator Boschee seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Mike Wobbema	Y
Senator Michelle Axtman	Y
Senator Josh Boschee	Y
Senator Diane Larson	Y
Senator Michelle Powers	Y

10:27 a.m. Motion passed 5-0-0.

10:27 a.m. Senator Powers will carry the bill.

**Additional written testimony:**

Tiffany Skor, manager of therapy and rehabilitation services for Sanford Health Bismarck, submitted testimony #28464

Michelle Richart, Midwest Regional Liaison for United States Department of Defense, testified in support #28694

Janae Hughes, Chair of the North Dakota Board of Occupational Therapy Practice, submitted testimony in support #29165

Ben Price, President and CEO of National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, submitted testimony in support #29262, #29261

Nikki Wegner, President of North Dakota Long Term Care Association, submitted testimony in support #29369

Eniola Soetan, Delegate of the North Dakota Student Association, submitted testimony in support #29447

Brekka Kramer, President CEO of the Minot Area Chamber, testified in support #29469

10:28 a.m. Chairman Wobbema closed the meeting.

*Andrew Ficek, Committee Clerk*

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**SB 2146 ([25.0274.02000](#))**

**Workforce Development Committee (Sen. Wobbema, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (5 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2146 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar. This bill affects workforce development.



**Senate Workforce Development Committee  
Senator Mike Wobbema, Chair  
January 16, 2025  
SB 2146**

Chairman Wobbema and members of the Workforce Development Committee,

My name is Tiffany Skor and I am the manager of therapy and rehabilitation services for Sanford Health Bismarck. On behalf of Sanford Health, thank you for your consideration of SB 2146 – the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact – an important workforce opportunity.

Part of my role at Sanford is to manage outpatient occupational therapists that serve a large region including central and western North Dakota, northern South Dakota and eastern Montana. The licensure compact will improve access to the services occupational therapists provide, especially to those in rural areas. The compact allows occupational therapists to practice across state lines via telehealth and enhances mobility of occupational therapy practitioners, e.g. spouses of relocating military families.

This bill would also help ensure that patients receive the safe and competent care of occupational therapists that are licensed through compact states' licensure processes.

In closing, I encourage you to vote yes on SB 2146.

Thank you for your consideration and thank you for supporting North Dakota workforce development.

Sincerely,  
Tiffany Skor MOTR/L, CLT  
Bismarck Sanford Health  
Therapy and Rehabilitation  
[Tiffany.skor@sanfordhealth.org](mailto:Tiffany.skor@sanfordhealth.org)



**OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE**  
1500 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-1500

**January 16, 2025**

**The Honorable Senator Shannon Roers**  
**Chair, Senate Workforce Development Committee**

**Remarks of**  
**Michelle Richart**  
**Midwest Regional Liaison**  
**United States Department of Defense-State Liaison Office**

**Support of: SB 2146 – Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact**

**Testimony**

The Department of Defense is grateful for the opportunity to support policy changes proposed in North Dakota SB 2146, regarding the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact, a measure to reduce barriers to social work licensing and employment in North Dakota.

My name is Michelle Richart and I am the Midwest Regional Liaison for the Defense-State Liaison Office, operating under the direction of Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. We represent the Department and work with state leaders across the country who are concerned for troops and their families' welfare by harmonizing state and federal law and regulation on policy problems of national significance. These are identified by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, and the National Guard Bureau as areas where states can play a crucial role.

The Department of Defense has advocated for improved licensure and career portability for military Service members and their spouses for several years. Military spouses are disproportionately affected by state-specific professional licensing requirements that can cause delays and gaps in employment, with thirty-six percent requiring a state license to practice in their professions and an annual cross-state relocation rate more than ten times higher than their civilian counterparts. Accordingly, military spouses experience unemployment and underemployment at significantly higher rates than their civilian peers.

State policies enacting interstate licensure compacts, such as the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact, relieve one of the many stressors of frequent military moves by enabling military spouses to transfer their licenses more quickly across state lines and obtain employment as soon as they relocate to a new state. These policies facilitate greater career sustainability for military spouses, improving their families' financial security and overall resilience.

Interstate licensure compacts benefit not only military spouses, but also apply to all eligible professionals to include active-duty Service members, members of the reserve components, veterans, and civilians. By continuing to enact these beneficial policies, North Dakota can expand the opportunity to increase its workforce available to serve the local community while

continuing in its great tradition of providing an extraordinary degree of support to our military families as they move into and out of the state.

In closing, the Department of Defense is very appreciative of North Dakota's ongoing commitment and efforts to support members of the military and their families who sacrifice much in service to our country. Thank you for providing me the opportunity to provide comments in support of this policy proposal.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you might have.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle Richart", written in a cursive style.

**MICHELLE RICHART**  
Midwest Regional Liaison  
Defense-State Liaison Office



## 2025 SB 2146

### Senate Workforce Development Committee

#### Senator Wobbema, Chairman

January 16, 2025

Chairman Wobbema and members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee, I am Tim Blasl, President of the North Dakota Hospital Association (NDHA). I am here to testify in support of Senate Bill 2146. I ask that you give this bill a **Do Pass** recommendation.

Hospitals support the passage of the occupational therapy licensure compact because it would streamline the interstate practice of occupational therapy with the goal of improving public access to occupational therapy services. The practice of occupational therapy would occur in the state where the patient is located at the time of the patient encounter. The compact preserves the regulatory authority of states to protect public health and safety through the current system of state licensure.

Other health care professions have similar interstate licensing compacts that have worked well to make licensing across state lines faster and more efficient, such as the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC), the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) and Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Compact (APRN Compact), the Physical Therapy Compact (PT Compact), and the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT).

Additional benefits of adopting this particular compact are that it will:

- Increase public access to occupational therapy services by providing for the mutual recognition of other member state licenses;
- Enhance states' ability to protect the public's health and safety;
- Encourage cooperation of member states in regulating multistate occupational therapy practice;
- Support spouses of relocating military members;



- Enhance the exchange of licensure, investigative, and disciplinary information between member states;
- Allow a remote state to hold a provider of services with a compact privilege in that state accountable to that state's practice standards; and
- Facilitate the use of telehealth technology to increase access to occupational therapy services.

In summary, we support passage of this bill and hope that you will give it a **Do Pass** recommendation.

I would be happy to respond to any questions you may have. Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tim Blasl, President  
North Dakota Hospital Association



## NORTH DAKOTA STATE BOARD OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTICE

PO Box 4005 | Bismarck, ND 58502-4005 | Telephone (701) 250-0847  
ndotboard@aptnd.com www.ndotboard.com

### SENATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

JANUARY 16, 2025

### TESTIMONY OF JANA E HUGHES NORTH DAKOTA BOARD OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTICE SENATE BILL NO. 2146

Chairman Wobbema, members of the Committee,

I am Janae Hughes, Chair of the North Dakota Board of Occupational Therapy Practice (the Board), and I submit this testimony on behalf of the Board. The Board supports Senate Bill 2146 to join the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact. The benefits include, but are not limited to, occupational therapists and occupational therapist assistants to practice in all states that join the compact, increased support relocating military spouses, and increased mobility for OT practitioners especially those who work near state lines.

Upon approval of joining the OT Compact, the Board will need to implement additional fees for the members who also join to cover the compact fees as well as Board administrative fees. For this reason, additional legislative changes are needed if the OT Compact is adopted. Section 43-40.1-03(3) on page 5, line 15 of SB 2146 provides that member states may charge a fee for granting a compact privilege. The Board's enabling statute in N.D.C.C. § 43-40-07 grants the Board the ability to prescribe specific fees by rule. The compact privilege fee would need to be added to the list of fees in N.D.C.C. § 43-40-07 to be consistent with the OT Compact and give the Board the specific authority to prescribe the compact privilege fee by rule. The Board therefore respectfully requests that N.D.C.C. § 43-40-07 be amended, in conjunction with adopting the OT Compact, to add the compact privilege fee to the list of fees that the Board is authorized to prescribe by rule.

We, at the Board, encourage your votes to support the OT Interstate Compact.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janae Hughes, OTR/L".

Janae Hughes, OTR/L  
NDBOTP Chair

TESTIMONY OF  
LIEUTENANT COLONEL JAY SHELDON  
NORTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD  
BEFORE THE  
SENATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
16 JANUARY 2023  
SENATE BILL 2146

Chair Wobbema, Vice Chair Axtman, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jay Sheldon, and I am here on behalf of the North Dakota Military Commission to express support for SB 2146, which would enable North Dakota to join the interstate licensing compact for occupational therapy.

Our state is home to many dedicated military service members and their families, who can face the challenges of relocating for military service. For military spouses who are licensed occupational therapists, moving across state lines can mean navigating a new set of licensure requirements and possible delays.

Joining the occupational therapy compact would provide licensed therapists from the more than 25 member states (3 other states with pending legislation) the ability to transfer their credentials to North Dakota with minimal administrative burden. This flexibility is vital for military families, allowing spouses to maintain their careers and, at the same time, helping to address the statewide demand for occupational therapists. As many North Dakota communities face shortages in this field, compact membership would enable our state to tap into a larger pool of qualified professionals who are ready and willing to serve all of our citizens.

North Dakota has long been committed to supporting military families, and joining this compact is a meaningful way to honor that commitment. It would make North Dakota a more military-friendly state, easing the licensure process for our service members' spouses and empowering them to positively impact their communities.

On behalf of the North Dakota Military Commission, I ask you to support SB 2146.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions.



## Fact Sheet: States and the OT Compact

The **Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact** (OT Compact) will allow licensed Occupational Therapists (OTs) and Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTAs) to practice *in all states that join the compact*. This will remove the need for practitioners to get an individual license in each state where they want to practice.

### The Basics

- The OT Compact is an interstate compact, which is a constitutionally authorized, legally binding contract between states.
- The OT Compact is the same in form and function as other occupational licensure compacts like the Nurse Licensure Compact, the Physical Therapy Compact, and the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact.
- The OT Compact authorizes in person practice and telepractice based on a valid, unrestricted home state license in other compact member states for both Occupational Therapists (OTs) and Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTAs)
- The OT Compact took effect in 2022 when 10 states enacted authorizing legislation.
- The American Occupational Therapy Association and the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy are leading the compact. The National Center for Interstate Compacts at the Council of State Governments facilitated the development of the OT Compact.

### Benefits

- Preserve and strengthen state licensure systems
- Enhance public safety
- Improve access to Occupational Therapy services
- Increase market opportunities for OTs and OTAs by authorizing practice in member states, including via telehealth
- Enhance mobility for OT practitioners
- Support relocating military families
- Improve continuity of care when clients travel or relocate
- Encourage cooperation among compact member states in regulating OT practice

### Dispelling the Myths

- As with the existing licensure compacts, the OT Compact has no impact on a state's scope of practice – this is not a takeover of state regulatory authority.
- As with existing licensure compacts, the OT Compact leaves state specific licensure requirements in place – this is not a takeover of state licensing systems.
- The OT Compact enhances states' authority to protect the public and regulate the OT profession.
- OTs and OTAs are licensed in all 50 states, with consistency in licensure requirements.
- The Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact is a joint initiative by AOTA and NBCOT®



January 14, 2025

Chairman, Mike Wobbema  
Workforce Development Committee  
North Dakota Legislative Council, State Capitol  
600 East Boulevard Avenue  
Bismark, ND 58505

Dear Chairman Wobbema:

RE: Support for SB-2146, Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact Legislation

This correspondence is on behalf of the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc. (NBCOT®), in support of the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact Legislation now before you for consideration. As with other mutual recognition compacts, this compact requires member states to agree to and recognize active and unencumbered licenses from other member states. It is important to highlight that this legislative initiative is supported jointly by NBCOT and the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA).

NBCOT is the certification body for over 218,000 occupational therapy professionals in the United States who are currently certified as either an Occupational Therapist Registered (OTR®) or a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA®). The mission of NBCOT is to serve the public interest by advancing client care and professional practice through evidence-based certification standards and the validation of knowledge essential for effective practice in occupational therapy. NBCOT's vision is certified occupational therapy professionals providing effective evidence-based services across all areas of practice worldwide.

NBCOT certification programs have received and maintain accreditation by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). NBCOT is a proud member of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE).

Currently, 50 states, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia require NBCOT initial certification for occupational therapy state regulation (e.g., licensing). It is worth noting that in the profession of occupational therapy, uniform licensing requirements exist throughout each of these jurisdictions. These uniform requirements include

consistent educational/academic requirements, practicum internships, and successful completion of the national certification examination which is developed and administered by NBCOT. Each occupational therapy regulatory board also recognizes the same minimum passing score which enhances consistency from one jurisdiction to another. This consistent regulatory foundation throughout the profession provides a strong infrastructure to support the occupational therapy licensure compact.

In the spirit of serving the public interest, NBCOT supports the occupational therapy licensure compact because it will:

- provide greater access to patient/client care,
- ensure that occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants meet acceptable standards of practice,
- enhance the exchange of adverse and disciplinary action information amongst occupational therapy state regulatory boards who participate in the compact, which helps to protect the public we serve,
- require criminal background checks of occupational therapy practitioners,
- facilitate mobility and portability for occupational therapy practitioners, which ultimately benefits patients/clients who need care including those who live in rural and/or underserved areas,
- allow military personnel and spouses to maintain their certifications more easily when moving from one location to another, and
- promote a more streamlined, flexible approach to patient/client care during times of state and/or national emergency, such as the pandemic we are experiencing today.

In closing, NBCOT appreciates your consideration of this occupational therapy licensure compact legislation, which is similar to other professional compacts including physical therapy, medicine, nursing, psychology, speech pathology and audiology, emergency medical services, and others.

Should you have questions or need additional information, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Price", is placed above the typed name.

Ben Price, CAE, ICE-CCP  
NBCOT, President and CEO

Enclosure: OT Compact Fact Sheet



January 15, 2025

Senator Mike Wobbema  
Chairman, Senate Committee on Workforce Development  
North Dakota State Capitol  
600 East Boulevard Avenue  
Bismarck, ND 58505

**Re: Please Support Senate Bill 2146, Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact**

Dear Chairman Wobbema:

On behalf of AOTA, and in collaboration with the North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association, I am writing to ask you to support Senate Bill 2146, which would adopt the Occupational Therapy Practice Interstate Compact (OT Compact). This legislation is scheduled to be heard by your committee on Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup>.

The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) is the national professional association representing the interests of more than 213,000 occupational therapists, students of occupational therapy, and occupational therapy assistants. AOTA was established to represent the interests and concerns of occupational therapy practitioners and students, and to improve the quality of occupational therapy services.

Much like the existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, counselors, and EMS personnel, the OT Compact will increase licensure portability while allowing member state regulatory boards, to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information. Existing interstate compacts have been successful in reducing barriers for practitioners who wish to provide services in other states.

The OT Compact utilizes a “mutual recognition” model of interstate practice, whereby Compact member states agree to “recognize” valid licenses issued by other member states. This approach is made possible by the fact that core licensure requirements for Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapy Assistants are virtually the same across all 50 states. To obtain a compact privilege to practice in a remote state, an occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant must have a license in good standing in their home state (primary state of residence) and the home state must be a member of the OT compact. A compact privilege is equivalent to a license to practice occupational therapy in the remote member state.

The OT Compact will benefit consumers, our members, and the profession in North Dakota by:

- Enhancing mobility for occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants;
- Increasing access to occupational therapy services for clients;
- Facilitating continuity of care when clients or practitioners relocate or travel to another state;

- Allowing military personnel and spouses to more easily maintain their certifications when relocating;
- Creating an alternative path to licensure for compact privilege holders who change their primary state of residence between two compact member states;
- Improving communication between states by mandating full participation in a licensing and disciplinary data system, ensuring that all adverse actions and disciplinary sanctions are reported regularly, and facilitating sharing of investigatory information;
- Requiring criminal background checks; and
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

Importantly, the OT Compact preserves each member state's authority to regulate the profession. Practitioners utilizing the OT Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state's scope of practice.

With these points in mind, we urge you to support Senate Bill 2146. Please feel free to contact me at 240-752-1174 or via email at [dmarkels@aota.org](mailto:dmarkels@aota.org) if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel Markels".

Daniel Markels  
Manager, State Legislative Affairs Manager  
American Occupational Therapy Association

cc: Members of the Senate Committee on Workforce Development





**National Center for  
Interstate Compacts**  
THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

**SB 2146 Legislative Testimony (Neutral)  
Senate Workforce Development Committee  
January 16, 2025**

Chair Wobbema and Members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee:

My name is Carl Sims and I am a Deputy Director for the National Center for Interstate Compacts at The Council of State Governments (CSG). CSG provides nonpartisan policy support to states on interstate compacts.

The Occupational Therapy Compact (OT Compact) is an interstate compact, or a contract among states, providing Occupational Therapists (OTs) and occupational Therapy Assistants (OTAs) a voluntary and streamlined pathway to practice in other compact member states. Like other interstate licensure compacts, the OT Compact is designed to improve access to services, enhance the mobility of practitioners, support relocating military spouses, and improve continuity of care.

The OT Compact establishes uniform criteria for an OT or OTA to be authorized for multi-state practice in a compact member state. Practitioners who meet the uniform requirements, such as having an active license and residence in a compact member state, are permitted to obtain a compact privilege to practice, which is equivalent to a license in another state. An OT or OTA using a privilege to practice must follow the specific laws and regulations of the state they are providing services in.

The compact additionally strengthens public protection by establishing a data system that enables compact member states to efficiently share investigative and disciplinary information with one another.

The OT Compact currently has 31 member states and is in the process of becoming operational. North Dakota is currently a member of seven of the eighteen available licensure compacts.

Thank you for the opportunity to deliver informational testimony. CSG is available to assist with any questions regarding the OT Compact or interstate compact policy.

Respectfully,

Carl Sims, Deputy Program Director  
National Center for Interstate Compacts  
The Council of State Governments

**Testimony on Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact**  
**Senate Workforce Development Committee**  
**January 16, 2025**  
**Senate Bill 2146**

Chairman Wobbema and Members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee. My name is Nikki Wegner, and I am the President with the North Dakota Long Term Care Association. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2146, an essential initiative that aligns with our shared goal of strengthening North Dakota's workforce.

The proposed licensure compact is designed to simplify the process for occupational therapists to provide services across state lines while maintaining high standards of safety and accountability. By allowing licensed professionals to practice in member states with greater ease, this compact directly addresses the growing demand for occupational therapy services, especially in rural and underserved communities.

Several other healthcare professions, such as nursing, physical therapy, and psychology, have successfully implemented similar interstate compacts. These frameworks have proven effective in improving access to care, enhancing mobility for professionals, and ensuring public safety.

By supporting Senate Bill 2146, North Dakota has the opportunity to join this innovative initiative and position itself as a leader in improving access to occupational therapy services for its residents.

In closing, I respectfully urge you to support this important legislation and vote in favor of SB 2146. Thank you for your leadership and for advancing solutions that strengthen our state's workforce.

Nikki Wegner MS, OTR/L, President  
North Dakota Long Term Care Association  
1900 North 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
(701) 222-0660  
[nikki@ndltca.org](mailto:nikki@ndltca.org)



January 16, 2025

Chairman Wobbema & Members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee,

My name is Megan Boucher, and I am an occupational therapist working in Fargo and Wahpeton. I have been the Vice President of Legislation and Practice for North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association's Board of Management since 2019. On behalf of the North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association (NDOTA), I stand in support of SB 2146, the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact (OT Compact). The OT Compact is an interstate compact that recognizes those Occupational Therapists (OTs) and Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants (COTAs) who are licensed in good standing as eligible to practice in a given state via the "compact privilege."

Today, we're fortunate to be joined by representatives from the Council of State Governments (CSG) and the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), who can address technical questions about the compact's structure. From my perspective as an occupational therapy provider in North Dakota, I'd like to highlight a few key benefits of joining the interstate compact.

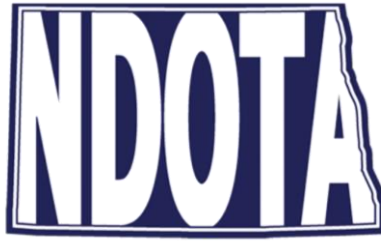
#### Workforce Solutions

North Dakota is experiencing a shortage of occupational therapists (OTs) and certified occupational therapy assistants (COTAs), making it difficult for businesses to fill open positions. Clinics and hospitals often face long waitlists—ranging from 3 to 6 months—for patients of all ages and diagnoses seeking occupational therapy. Additionally, schools are relying on contracts with outpatient pediatric clinics to meet the needs of their special education programs.

Joining the compact would allow OTs and COTAs to practice in North Dakota more easily, while those moving to the state could start working without delays from additional licensing processes. This would help attract and retain skilled professionals, ultimately improving access to care across the state.

#### Reducing Financial and Administrative Burden

For clinicians needing multiple state licenses, the current process involves tracking separate renewal dates and CEU requirements, which takes time away from patient care. Businesses often cover these licensing costs, adding to their financial burden. Joining the compact would streamline



licensure management, reduce costs for businesses and administrative tasks for practitioners, and allow more focus on delivering skilled services to patients in need.

#### Increasing Access for Rural Areas

Healthcare in rural areas faces ongoing challenges due to staffing shortages and unique rural dynamics. Joining the compact would make it easier for OTs and COTAs to practice across state lines, enabling new ventures in border areas and improving access to care for North Dakota residents—especially in rural and underserved communities near South Dakota, Montana, and Minnesota. Wahpeton, ND is an excellent example. Wahpeton is on the Red River, about 20 miles north of the border of South Dakota. For patients living in Wahpeton and Southeast North Dakota, there are few options for outpatient providers with a long waitlist. Many have to drive to Fargo to be seen, between 1-1.5 hours each way. This means that one therapy visit could take up a half day's work schedule, creating a large barrier to accessing services. With a licensure compact, a company could feasibly set up a clinic in Wahpeton to serve Southeast North Dakota rural communities in addition to those across the state's borders, increasing the availability of occupational therapy services to an underserved area.

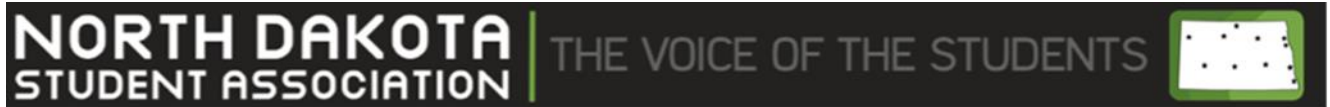
#### Economic & Business Growth

Participating in the compact would attract more occupational therapy professionals to North Dakota, bolstering healthcare systems, schools, and businesses—while addressing workforce shortages. It also creates a streamlined path for businesses to grow and expand their reach.

In conclusion, the North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association urges your support for joining the National Occupational Therapy Compact. This step will strengthen healthcare, improve service access, and enhance professional mobility, benefiting both practitioners and residents across North Dakota.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Megan K. Boucher, M.A., OTR/L  
Vice President of Legislation and Practice  
North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association

**SB 2146**

January 16, 2025

Eniola Soetan, North Dakota Student Association

Eniola.soetan@dickinsonstate.edu

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Eniola Soetan, and I am a delegate of the North Dakota Student Association. I am writing to express my support for SB 2146.

The North Dakota Student Association (NDSA) is a student organization established in 1969 that is dedicated to ensuring that students have a voice in policy that affects Higher Education. The NDSA consists of delegates from each of the 11 public institutions that meet monthly to engage students in Higher Education policy in North Dakota. Our mission is to empower students, foster collaboration between students across campuses in the North Dakota University System (NDUS), and to advocate on issues of higher education in support of access, affordability, quality, and the student experience.

The NDSA is committed to representing the voice and interests of the 45,000 postsecondary students served across the NDUS, and furthermore advocating for these interests. The NDSA recognizes the diverse population of students that it serves along with the variety of needs that may come with serving such a diverse population.

Per the American Journal of Occupational Therapy, the purpose of occupational therapy is “enhancing or enabling participation in roles, habits, and routines in home, school, workplace, community, and other settings” [\[1\]](#). Occupational therapy services are instrumental in ensuring that students are able to make the most of their education, and furthermore be able to adequately “receive education preparing them to enter workforces in emerging technologies with an emphasis on the North Dakota workforce”, which is an NDSA legislative priority for the 2025-2027 biennium as outlined in [NDSA-01-2425](#). Increasing access to occupational therapy services in the state of North Dakota ultimately creates more opportunities for existing NDUS students to

enhance their educational participation, as well as for potential new NDUS students who may not have seen themselves able to thrive in a post-secondary setting without the help of such a fruitful service.

According to a May 2020 fact sheet done by the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences, only 29.6% of occupational therapists and occupational therapist assistants practiced in rural areas of North Dakota [2]. Of that 29.6%, 18.1% practiced in large rural areas, 5.8% practiced in small rural areas, and 5.7% were employed in isolated rural areas [2]. Despite this spread, students and residents in all areas of the state deserve to have easy access to potentially lifechanging occupational therapy services. By fostering collaboration with nearby states, SB 2145 increases the availability of occupational therapy services for every North Dakotan, and therefore cultivates improvements in quality of life for North Dakotan residents, and improvements in educational participation for the NDUS students that the NDSA serves.

Furthermore, by enacting SB 2145, we would be opening greater employment opportunities for current occupational therapists and pre-occupational therapist students in North Dakota by creating whole new demographics for which occupational therapists could serve while retaining North Dakota residency. In this way, we can further assure that the education that North Dakota students are receiving is allowing them to enter the workforce in more innovative and extensive ways, effectively preparing them and setting them up for life after their postsecondary education.

To support the 45,000 students served by the NDSA, increase the quality of the NDUS student experience, and further bolster NDUS students with opportunities to enter into the workforce, I would like to express my support for SB 2146, and on behalf of the NDSA ask for a DO PASS recommendation on SB 2146 from the committee.

[1]- <https://ahs.uic.edu/news-stories/occupational-therapy-an-untapped-resource-in-student-mental-health-and-well-being/>

[2]- [https://med.und.edu/service/healthcare-workforce/\\_files/docs/2020/occupational-therapists-and-otas-2020.pdf](https://med.und.edu/service/healthcare-workforce/_files/docs/2020/occupational-therapists-and-otas-2020.pdf)



**Support for SB 2146**  
**Senate Workforce Development Committee**  
**Chairman Wobbema**  
**January 16, 2025**

Chairman Wobbema and Members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee,

I am Brekka Kramer, President | CEO of the Minot Area Chamber EDC (MACEDC) and Executive Committee Member of the North Dakota Military Commission. On behalf of the MACEDC, Task Force 21, and our member investors, I offer testimony in favor of Senate Bill 2146 to join the interstate licensing compact for occupational therapy

The MACEDC's mission is to advocate for and invest in business activity by being a collaborative partner in the community, focused on improving quality of life for all. MACEDC has five key strategic pillars, two of them being workforce development and military support. We believe that Senate Bill 2146 as proposed would have a positive impact on the workforce environment of our great state by supporting licensed occupational therapists, specifically military spouses, in their endeavor to continue work during their relocation.

Making the licensing transition easier not only benefits the occupational therapist but everyone in North Dakota, allowing them to provide their services and join the workforce.

I am a proud member of the North Dakota Military Commission, which has a vision to make North Dakota the most military friendly state in the nation. As a long-term advocate for improved licensure and career portability for military service members and their spouses, I ask for your support of Senate Bill 2146 and am available for any questions you may have.

Thank you,

Brekka Kramer  
Minot Area Chamber EDC President | CEO  
North Dakota Military Commission Executive Committee Member





### **Letter of Support – SB 2146**

Wednesday, January 15, 2025

Chairman Wobbema and Members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee,

For the record, my name is Cale Dunwoody, and I have the distinct pleasure of serving as the Vice President of Public Policy for the Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce (FMWF Chamber). On behalf of our over 1,700 members, I respectfully offer testimony in support of Senate Bill 2146.

At the FMWF Chamber, our mission is to protect and promote business, inspire individuals, cultivate communities, and influence action. We believe the passage of this licensure compact for Occupational Therapy will further improve the state's workforce landscape and enhance its ability to attract skilled professionals. This bill increases access to critical services, enhances public health and safety, and promotes cooperation with neighboring compact member states, such as Minnesota, Montana and South Dakota.

Additionally, this bill provides greater flexibility for military spouses who are often highly qualified but face barriers when relocating due to military orders. By reducing burdensome and duplicative licensing requirements, we empower these individuals to continue their professional careers, contributing to our local economy and enriching our communities.

Senate Bill 2146 is a vital step in improving the workforce environment in North Dakota, enhancing our ability to attract talent from across the nation. We encourage this committee and the Legislative Assembly to support this bill, along with other initiatives, to help us address our state's critical workforce challenges.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and your commitment to North Dakota.

Sincerely,

Cale Dunwoody  
Vice President of Public Policy  
Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce



**2025 HOUSE INDUSTRY, BUSINESS AND LABOR**

**SB 2146**

# 2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Industry, Business and Labor Committee Room JW327C, State Capitol

SB 2146  
3/24/2025

A BILL for an Act to create and enact chapter 43-40.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the occupational therapy licensure compact.

9:01 a. m. Chairman Warrey opened the meeting.

Members Present: Chairman Warrey, Vice Chairman Ostlie, Vice Chairman Johnson, Representatives Bahl, C. Brown, T. Brown, Grindberg, Kasper, Koppelman, D. Ruby, Schauer, Vollmer

Members Absent: Representatives Finley DeVille, Schatz

### Discussion Topics:

- Workforce solutions
- Streamline licensure management
- Increasing access for rural areas
- National background check
- Compact privilege
- Support military families

9:02 a.m. Senator Kristin Roers, District 27, Fargo, ND, introduced and testified.

9:07 a.m. Megan K. Boucher, Vice President of Legislation and Practice, North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association, testified in favor and submitted testimony #43516.

9:18 a.m. Jay Sheldon, Lieutenant Colonel, Administrator, ND Military Commission, North Dakota National Guard, testified in favor and submitted testimony #43332 and #43667.

9:24 a.m. Tim Blasl, President, North Dakota Hospital Association, testified in favor and submitted testimony #43450.

9:18 a.m. Daniel E. Markels, State Legislative Affairs Manager, American Occupational Therapy Association, testified in favor and submitted testimony #43437.

9:35 a.m. Carl Sims, Deputy Program Director, The Council of State Governments, testified and submitted testimony as neutral #43453.

9:40 a.m. Representative Kasper moved Do Pass.

9:40 a.m. Representative Bahl seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Jonathan Warrey	Y

Representative Mitch Ostlie	Y
Representative Jorin Johnson	Y
Representative Landon Bahl	Y
Representative Collette Brown	Y
Representative Timothy Brown	Y
Representative Lisa Finley-DeVile	AB
Representative Karen Grindberg	Y
Representative Jim Kasper	Y
Representative Ben Koppelman	Y
Representative Dan Ruby	AB
Representative Mike Schatz	Y
Representative Austin Schauer	Y
Representative Daniel R. Vollmer	Y

Motion passed 12-0-2.

9:41 a.m. Representative T. Brown will carry the bill.

**Additional Written Testimony:**

Michelle Richart, Midwest Region Liaison, United States Department of Defense, submitted testimony in favor #43422.

Cale Dunwoody, Fargo, Moorehead, West Fargo Chamber of Commerce, submitted testimony in favor #43554.

Niki J. Wegner, North Dakota Long Term Care Association, submitted testimony in favor #43594.

Tiffany Skor, Therapy and Rehabilitation Manager, Sanford Health, submitted testimony in favor #43618.

9:41 a.m. Chairman Warrey closed the meeting.

*Diane Lillis, Committee Clerk*

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**SB 2146 ([25.0274.02000](#))**

**Industry, Business and Labor Committee (Rep. Warrey, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (12 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). SB 2146 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.

TESTIMONY OF  
LIEUTENANT COLONEL JAY SHELDON  
NORTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD  
BEFORE THE  
HOUSE INDUSTRY, BUSINESS, AND LABOR COMMITTEE  
24 MARCH 2025  
SENATE BILL 2146

Chair Warrey and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jay Sheldon, and I am here on behalf of the North Dakota Military Commission to express support for SB 2146, which would enable North Dakota to join the interstate licensing compact for occupational therapy.

Our state is home to many dedicated military service members and their families, who can face the challenges of relocating for military service. For military spouses who are licensed occupational therapists, moving across state lines can mean navigating a new set of licensure requirements and possible delays.

Joining the occupational therapy compact would provide licensed therapists from the more than 25 member states (3 other states with pending legislation) the ability to transfer their credentials to North Dakota with minimal administrative burden. This flexibility is vital for military families, allowing spouses to maintain their careers and, at the same time, helping to address the statewide demand for occupational therapists. As many North Dakota communities face shortages in this field, compact membership would enable our state to tap into a larger pool of qualified professionals who are ready and willing to serve all of our citizens.

North Dakota has long been committed to supporting military families, and joining this compact is a meaningful way to honor that commitment. It would make North Dakota a more military-friendly state, easing the licensure process for our service members' spouses and empowering them to positively impact their communities.

On behalf of the North Dakota Military Commission, I ask you to support SB 2146.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions.



**OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE**  
1500 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-1500

**March 24, 2025**

**The Honorable Representative Warrey**  
**Chair, House Industry, Business and Labor Committee**

**Remarks of**  
**Michelle Richart**  
**Midwest Regional Liaison**  
**United States Department of Defense-State Liaison Office**

**Support of: SB 2146 – Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact**

**Testimony**

The Department of Defense is grateful for the opportunity to support policy changes proposed in North Dakota SB 2146, regarding the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact, a measure to reduce barriers to social work licensing and employment in North Dakota.

My name is Michelle Richart and I am the Midwest Regional Liaison for the Defense-State Liaison Office, operating under the direction of Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. We represent the Department and work with state leaders across the country who are concerned for troops and their families' welfare by harmonizing state and federal law and regulation on policy problems of national significance. These are identified by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, and the National Guard Bureau as areas where states can play a crucial role.

The Department of Defense has advocated for improved licensure and career portability for military Service members and their spouses for several years. Military spouses are disproportionately affected by state-specific professional licensing requirements that can cause delays and gaps in employment, with thirty-six percent requiring a state license to practice in their professions and an annual cross-state relocation rate more than ten times higher than their civilian counterparts. Accordingly, military spouses experience unemployment and underemployment at significantly higher rates than their civilian peers.

State policies enacting interstate licensure compacts, such as the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact, relieve one of the many stressors of frequent military moves by enabling military spouses to transfer their licenses more quickly across state lines and obtain employment as soon as they relocate to a new state. These policies facilitate greater career sustainability for military spouses, improving their families' financial security and overall resilience.

Interstate licensure compacts benefit not only military spouses, but also apply to all eligible professionals to include active-duty Service members, members of the reserve components, veterans, and civilians. By continuing to enact these beneficial policies, North Dakota can expand the opportunity to increase its workforce available to serve the local community while

continuing in its great tradition of providing an extraordinary degree of support to our military families as they move into and out of the state.

In closing, the Department of Defense is very appreciative of North Dakota's ongoing commitment and efforts to support members of the military and their families who sacrifice much in service to our country. Thank you for providing me the opportunity to provide comments in support of this policy proposal.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you might have.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michelle Richart". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**MICHELLE RICHART**  
Midwest Regional Liaison  
Defense-State Liaison Office



March 21, 2025

Representative Jonathan Warrey  
Chairman, House Industry, Business, and Labor Committee  
North Dakota State Capitol  
600 East Boulevard Avenue  
Bismarck, ND 58505

**Re: Please Support Senate Bill 2146, Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact**

Dear Chairman Warrey:

On behalf of AOTA, and in collaboration with the North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association, I am writing to ask you to support Senate Bill 2146, which would adopt the Occupational Therapy Practice Interstate Compact (OT Compact). This legislation passed the North Dakota Senate unanimously in January and is now scheduled to be heard by your committee on Monday, March 24.

The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) is the national professional association representing the interests of more than 213,000 occupational therapists, students of occupational therapy, and occupational therapy assistants. AOTA was established to represent the interests and concerns of occupational therapy practitioners and students, and to improve the quality of occupational therapy services.

Much like the existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, counselors, and EMS personnel, the OT Compact will increase licensure portability while allowing member state regulatory boards, to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information. Existing interstate compacts have been successful in reducing barriers for practitioners who wish to provide services in other states.

The OT Compact utilizes a “mutual recognition” model of interstate practice, whereby Compact member states agree to “recognize” valid licenses issued by other member states. This approach is made possible by the fact that core licensure requirements for Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapy Assistants are virtually the same across all 50 states. To obtain a compact privilege to practice in a remote state, an occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant must have a license in good standing in their home state (primary state of residence) and the home state must be a member of the OT compact. A compact privilege is equivalent to a license to practice occupational therapy in the remote member state.

The OT Compact will benefit consumers, our members, and the profession in North Dakota by:

- Enhancing mobility for occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants;
- Increasing access to occupational therapy services for clients;
- Facilitating continuity of care when clients or practitioners relocate or travel to another state;



- Allowing military personnel and spouses to more easily maintain their certifications when relocating;
- Creating an alternative path to licensure for compact privilege holders who change their primary state of residence between two compact member states;
- Improving communication between states by mandating full participation in a licensing and disciplinary data system, ensuring that all adverse actions and disciplinary sanctions are reported regularly, and facilitating sharing of investigatory information;
- Requiring criminal background checks; and
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

Importantly, the OT Compact preserves each member state's authority to regulate the profession. Practitioners utilizing the OT Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state's scope of practice.

With these points in mind, we urge you to support Senate Bill 2146. Please feel free to contact me at 240-752-1174 or via email at [dmarkels@aota.org](mailto:dmarkels@aota.org) if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel Markels".

Daniel Markels  
Manager, State Legislative Affairs Manager  
American Occupational Therapy Association

cc: Members of the House Industry, Business, and Labor Committee



**2025 SB 2146**  
**House Industry Business and Labor Committee**  
**Representative Warrey, Chairman**  
**March 24, 2025**

Chairman Warrey and members of the House Industry Business and Labor Committee, I am Tim Blasl, President of the North Dakota Hospital Association (NDHA). I am here to testify in support of Senate Bill 2146. I ask that you give this bill a **Do Pass** recommendation.

Hospitals support the passage of the occupational therapy licensure compact because it would streamline the interstate practice of occupational therapy with the goal of improving public access to occupational therapy services. The practice of occupational therapy would occur in the state where the patient is located at the time of the patient encounter. The compact preserves the regulatory authority of states to protect public health and safety through the current system of state licensure.

Other health care professions have similar interstate licensing compacts that have worked well to make licensing across state lines faster and more efficient, such as the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC), the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) and Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Compact (APRN Compact), the Physical Therapy Compact (PT Compact), and the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT).

Additional benefits of adopting this particular compact are that it will:

- Increase public access to occupational therapy services by providing for the mutual recognition of other member state licenses;
- Enhance states' ability to protect the public's health and safety;
- Encourage cooperation of member states in regulating multistate occupational therapy practice;
- Support spouses of relocating military members;

- Enhance the exchange of licensure, investigative, and disciplinary information between member states;
- Allow a remote state to hold a provider of services with a compact privilege in that state accountable to that state's practice standards; and
- Facilitate the use of telehealth technology to increase access to occupational therapy services.

In summary, we support passage of this bill and hope that you will give it a **Do Pass** recommendation.

I would be happy to respond to any questions you may have. Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tim Blasl, President  
North Dakota Hospital Association



**SB 2146 Legislative Testimony (Neutral)**  
**House Industry, Business and Labor Committee**  
**March 24, 2025**

Chair Warrey and Members of the House Industry, Business and Labor Committee:

My name is Carl Sims and I am a Deputy Director for the National Center for Interstate Compacts at The Council of State Governments (CSG). CSG provides nonpartisan policy support to states on interstate compacts.

The Occupational Therapy Compact (OT Compact) is an interstate compact, or a contract among states, providing occupational therapists (OTs) and occupational therapy assistants (OTAs) a voluntary and streamlined pathway to practice in other compact member states. Like other interstate licensure compacts, the OT Compact is designed to improve access to services, enhance the mobility of practitioners, support relocating military spouses, and improve continuity of care.

The OT Compact establishes uniform criteria for an OT or OTA to be authorized for multi-state practice in a compact member state. Practitioners who meet the uniform requirements, such as having an active license and residence in a compact member state, are permitted to obtain a compact privilege to practice, which is equivalent to a license in another state. An OT or OTA using a privilege to practice must follow the specific laws and regulations of the state they are providing services in.

The compact additionally strengthens public protection by establishing a data system that enables compact member states to efficiently share investigative and disciplinary information with one another.

The OT Compact currently has 31 member states and is in the process of becoming operational. North Dakota is currently a member of eight of the nineteen available licensure compacts.

Thank you for the opportunity to deliver informational testimony. CSG is available to assist with any questions regarding the OT Compact or interstate compact policy.

Respectfully,

*Carl Sims*

Carl Sims, Deputy Program Director  
National Center for Interstate Compacts  
The Council of State Governments



March 24, 2025

Chairman Warrey & Members of the House Industry, Business, and Labor Committee,

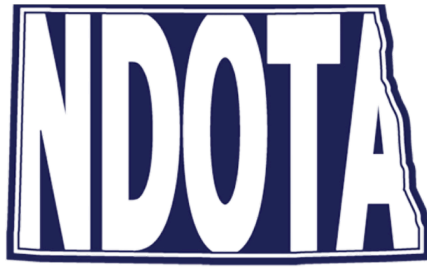
My name is Megan Boucher, an occupational therapist for almost 7 years and the Vice President of Legislation and Practice in the North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association (NDOTA) board of management. On behalf of the North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association (NDOTA), I stand in support of SB 2146, the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact (OT Compact). The OT Compact is an interstate compact that recognizes those Occupational Therapists (OTs) and Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants (COTAs) who are licensed in good standing as eligible to practice in a given state via the “compact privilege.”

Today, we’re fortunate to be joined by representatives from the Council of State Governments (CSG) and the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), who can address technical questions about the compact’s structure. From my perspective as an occupational therapy provider in North Dakota, I’d like to highlight a few key benefits of potentially joining the interstate compact.

#### Workforce Solutions

North Dakota is experiencing a shortage of occupational therapists (OTs) and certified occupational therapy assistants (COTAs), making it difficult for businesses to fill open positions. Clinics and hospitals often face long waitlists—ranging from 3 to 6 months—for patients of all ages and diagnoses seeking occupational therapy. Additionally, schools are relying on contracts with outpatient pediatric clinics to meet the needs of their special education programs.

Joining the compact would allow OTs and COTAs to practice in North Dakota more easily, while those moving to the state could start working without delays from additional licensing processes. This would help attract and retain skilled professionals, ultimately improving access to care across the state.



### Reducing Financial and Administrative Burden

For clinicians needing multiple state licenses, the current process involves tracking separate renewal dates and CEU requirements, which takes time away from patient care. Businesses often cover these licensing costs, adding to their financial burden.

Joining the compact would streamline licensure management, reducing costs for businesses and administrative tasks for practitioners, allowing more focus on delivering skilled services to patients in need.

### Increasing Access for Rural Areas

Healthcare in rural areas faces ongoing challenges due to staffing shortages and unique rural dynamics. Joining the compact would make it easier for OTs and COTAs to practice across state lines, enabling new ventures in border areas and improving access to care for North Dakota residents—especially in rural and underserved communities near South Dakota, Montana, and Minnesota.

Telehealth services would be more easily used in rural areas, as any occupational therapist that has licensure or compact privilege in North Dakota could offer telehealth or supervise a COTA using telehealth. This would reduce the wait time for rural citizens for evaluations and services.

### Economic & Business Growth

Participating in the compact would attract more occupational therapy professionals to North Dakota, bolstering healthcare systems, schools, and businesses—while addressing workforce shortages. It also creates a streamlined path for businesses to grow and expand their reach.

In conclusion, the North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association urges your support for joining the National Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact. This step will strengthen healthcare, improve service access, and enhance professional mobility, benefiting both practitioners and residents across North Dakota.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Megan K. Boucher, OTR/L

VP of Legislation and Practice, North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association



### Letter of Support – SB 2146

Monday, March 24, 2025

Chairman Warrey and Members of the House Industry, Business and Labor Committee,

For the record, my name is Cale Dunwoody, and I have the distinct pleasure of serving as the Vice President of Public Policy for the Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce (FMWF Chamber). On behalf of our over 1,700 members, I respectfully offer testimony in support of Senate Bill 2146.

At the FMWF Chamber, our mission is to protect and promote business, inspire individuals, cultivate communities, and influence action. We believe the passage of this licensure compact for Occupational Therapy will further improve the state's workforce landscape and enhance its ability to attract skilled professionals. This bill increases access to critical services, enhances public health and safety, and promotes cooperation with neighboring compact member states, such as Minnesota, Montana and South Dakota.

Additionally, this bill provides greater flexibility for military spouses who are often highly qualified but face barriers when relocating due to military orders. By reducing burdensome and duplicative licensing requirements, we empower these individuals to continue their professional careers, contributing to our local economy and enriching our communities.

Senate Bill 2146 is a vital step in improving the workforce environment in North Dakota, enhancing our ability to attract talent from across the nation. We encourage this committee and the Legislative Assembly to support this bill, along with other initiatives, to help us address our state's critical workforce challenges.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and your commitment to North Dakota.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cale Dunwoody', is placed above the printed name.

Cale Dunwoody  
Vice President of Public Policy  
Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce

**Testimony on Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact**  
**House Industry, Business and Labor Committee**  
**March 24, 2025**  
**Senate Bill 2146**

Chairman Warrey and Members of the Committee. My name is Nikki Wegner, and I am the President with the North Dakota Long Term Care Association. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2146, an essential initiative that aligns with our shared goal of strengthening North Dakota's workforce.

The proposed licensure compact is designed to simplify the process for occupational therapists to provide services across state lines while maintaining high standards of safety and accountability. By allowing licensed professionals to practice in member states with greater ease, this compact directly addresses the growing demand for occupational therapy services, especially in rural and underserved communities.

Several other healthcare professions, such as nursing, physical therapy, and psychology, have successfully implemented similar interstate compacts. These frameworks have proven effective in improving access to care, enhancing mobility for professionals, and ensuring public safety.

By supporting Senate Bill 2146, North Dakota has the opportunity to join this innovative initiative and position itself as a leader in improving access to occupational therapy services for its residents.

In closing, I respectfully urge you to support this important legislation and vote in favor of SB 2146. Thank you for your leadership and for advancing solutions that strengthen our state's workforce.

Nikki Wegner MS, OTR/L, President  
North Dakota Long Term Care Association  
1900 North 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
(701) 222-0660  
[nikki@ndltca.org](mailto:nikki@ndltca.org)





**House Industry, Business and Labor Committee  
Rep. Jonathan Warrey, Chair  
March 24, 2025  
SB 2146**

Chairman Warrey and members of the Committee,

My name is Tiffany Skor and I am the manager of therapy and rehabilitation services for Bismarck Sanford Health Therapy. On behalf of Sanford Health, thank you for your consideration of SB 2146 – the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact – an important workforce opportunity.

Part of my role is to manage outpatient occupational therapists that serve a large region including central and western North Dakota, northern South Dakota and eastern Montana. The licensure compact will improve access to the services occupational therapists provide, especially those in rural areas. The compact allows occupational therapists to practice across state lines via telehealth and enhances mobility of occupational therapy practitioners, e.g. spouses of relocating military families.

This bill would also ensure the citizens from our state of North Dakota receive the safe and competent care of occupational therapists that are licensed within our compact that already have this legislation enacted.

In closing, I encourage you to vote yes on SB 2146.

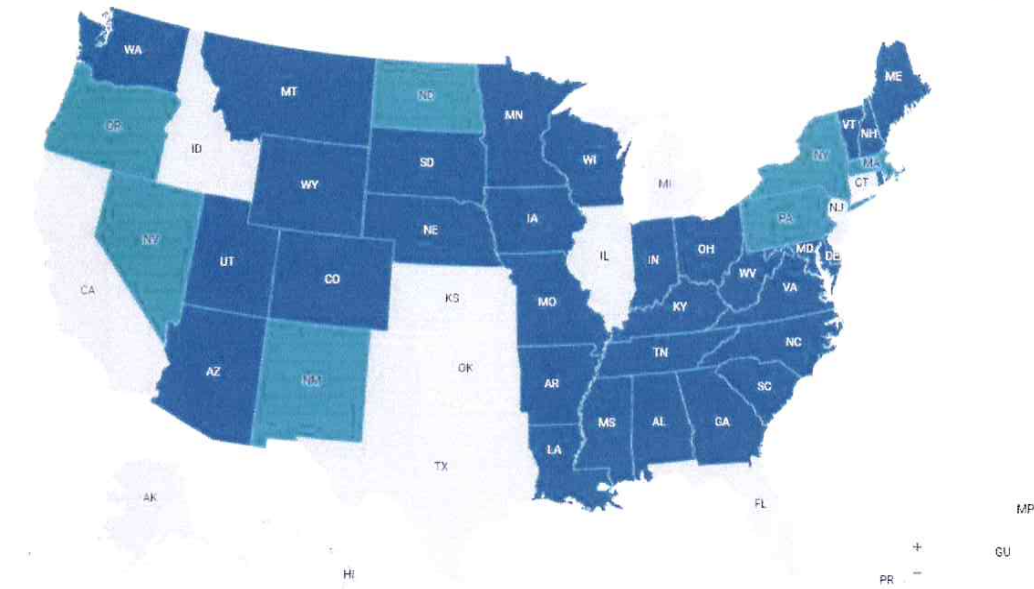
Thank you for your consideration and thank you for supporting North Dakota workforce development.

Sincerely,  
Tiffany Skor MOTR/L, CLT  
Bismarck Sanford Health  
Therapy and Rehabilitation  
Tiffany.skor@sanfordhealth.org

## act Map

### act Map

Inacted - Compact Member   Legislation Filed   No Active Legislation



act - Download image created with Datawrapper

### OT Compact Map

Legislation Enacted - Compact Member   Legislation Filed   No Active Legislation

