

Meghan Pudeler
American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA)
LD 2043

My name is Meghan Pudeler and I am a Director of State Advocacy & Outreach for the American Academy of PAs (AAPA) and here to testify in support of LD 2043, which would add the state of Maine to the physician assistants compact.

The PA compact is an interstate occupational licensure compact for physician assistants that will facilitate interstate practice by PAs. It is similar in form and function to a number of other licensure compacts by other professions enacted by the state of Maine, including the physical therapy licensure compact, occupational therapy licensure compact, the nurse licensure compact, the interstate medical licensure compact, audiology and speech language pathology, and the EMS compact.

The PA compact has been enacted in Utah, Delaware, and Wisconsin and is under consideration in 8 states thus far this legislative session.

The PA compact utilizes a “mutual recognition” model of interstate practice, where Compact member states agree to “recognize” valid licenses issued by other member states. To utilize the compact, a physician assistant must have a license in good standing in their home state – their primary state of residence – and the home state must be a member of the PA compact. When a licensee wants to work in another member state (known as the “remote state”) the licensee obtains a “compact privilege” from the PA compact commission, the interstate body composed of member state officials tasked with administering the Compact upon its enactment by 7 states. A compact privilege is equivalent to a license to practice as a physician assistant in the remote member state.

The PA compact has many benefits for PAs in the state of Maine:

- Facilitates multistate practice by reducing the burden of maintaining multiple licenses
- Expands employment opportunities for PAs by authorizing practice in other member states and allowing practice into new markets
- Improves continuity of care when patients or providers travel or relocate
- Supports relocating military spouses

The PA compact also has a number of benefits for state regulators:

- Reduces application processing time
- Encourages cooperation among compact member states in regulating PA practice and facilitates cross state licensure board cooperation on investigations and disputes
- Enhances public safety through a shared data system
- Allows states to charge a fee for a compact privilege in that state as well as for renewal
- Preserves the current state-based licensure system

The PA compact will not affect scope of practice – PAs using a compact privilege to practice must abide by the laws and regulations of the state which they are practicing in at the time.

Overall the PA compact will support military families, improve access to and continuity of care for Maine residents, and increase license portability for physician assistants based in Maine, while maintaining the current system of state licensure.