



MANPOWER AND
RESERVE AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1500 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-1500

April 30, 2021

The Honorable Heather B. Sanborn
3 State House Station
State House, Room 320
Augusta, ME 04333-0003

The Honorable Denise A. Tepler
2 State House Station
State House, Room 333
Augusta, ME 04333-0002

RE: Memorandum of Support – LD863 – An Act To Have Maine Join the Interstate Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact To Improve Telehealth Options for Psychologists and Their Patients

Dear Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler and Honorable Committee Members:

On behalf of military families and the Department of Defense, I am writing to express the support of the Department of Defense for the policy changes proposed in Maine LD863, the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PsyPACT), which addresses licensing issues affecting our service members and their families. I would like to thank you for considering this issue in the 2021 session.

My name is Christopher Arnold. I am the Northeast Regional Liaison for the United States Department of Defense-State Liaison Office, operating under the direction of Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. Our mission is to be a resource to state policymakers as they work to address quality of life issues of military families.

The Secretaries of the Military Departments have made the importance of military spouse licensure explicitly clear as they consider the availability of license reciprocity when evaluating future basing or mission alternatives. This consideration was codified as requirement in the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act.¹

Approved in February 2015 by the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB) Board of Directors, PsyPACT has been created to facilitate telehealth and temporary in-person, face-to-face practice of psychology across jurisdictional boundaries. PsyPACT is an interstate compact, which is an agreement between states to enact legislation and enter into a contract for a specific, limited purpose or address a particular policy issue.

PsyPACT is of dual benefit, in that it not only expands access to care for military services members, but also allows military spouses who are practicing psychologists to conduct interstate

¹ Notably, §2883(h) requires the Department and each of the military services to produce annual basing decision scorecards at the state and installation level considering military family readiness issues, including interstate portability of licensure credentials.

practice via telehealth or in person. To date, 20 states have joined PsyPACT and 11 states currently have legislation pending in addition to Maine. This compact is designed to achieve the following purposes and objectives:

- Increase public access to professional psychological services by allowing for telepsychological practice across state lines as well as temporary in-person, face-to-face services into a state which the psychologist is not licensed to practice psychology;
- Enhance the states' ability to protect the public's health and safety, especially client/patient safety;
- Encourage the cooperation of Compact States in the areas of psychology licensure and regulation;
- Facilitate the exchange of information between Compact States regarding psychologist licensure, adverse actions and disciplinary history;
- Promote compliance with the laws governing psychological practice in each Compact State; and
- Invest all Compact States with the authority to hold licensed psychologists accountable through the mutual recognition of Compact State licenses.

Portable employment opportunities support military spouse career development. PsyPACT allows an active duty servicemember, or their spouse, to designate a home state where the individual has a current license in good standing. This state then serves as the individual's home state for as long as the servicemember is on active duty, while adhering to the laws, rules and scope of practice in Maine.

We appreciate the opportunity to support the policies outlined in LD863 this session and would like to thank Representative Tepler for sponsoring this important initiative. Joining PsyPACT will improve access to care and allow military personnel and spouses to more easily maintain their certifications when relocating. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you might have.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER R. ARNOLD
Northeast Region Liaison
Defense-State Liaison Office

CC: Members of the Joint Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services