

Minnesota LPN Alliance:

Vital to

Quality Healthcare



March 5, 2012

Sen. Gerlach
120 State Capitol
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Senator Gerlach:

The Minnesota LPN Alliance is comprised of over 2000 LPNs throughout the state of MN and are represented by unions such as SEIU Healthcare Minnesota, AFSCME Council 65, the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), and the Minnesota Licensed Practical Nurses Association Council 105. Since forming the LPN Alliance in 2010, we have consistently grown membership and are committed to advocating for the continued strong role of the LPN in all health care settings. We are writing to let you know our association supports your nurse compact legislation.

Currently in Minnesota we have an agreement with the bordering states that allows them to practice in Minnesota but a Minnesota nurse must go through the licensure procedure to work in one of those states. In this day and age of mobility it is another cost and step to find employment when moving state to state.

Minnesota has a high number of military families and the compact would allow spouses that move with their military spouse to work in other compact states using their Minnesota license.

The compact also allows another added protection to the public by allowing states to report actions taken against a nurse in their state where the current system does not allow this information to be shared. With technology improving daily the record keeping and data base will only improve and create a system that can handle those incidents of nurses that are harming patients.

Minnesota has very high standards of nursing care and there are concerns raised about bringing in nurses from states with lower standards or different educational requirements. We do believe that the checks and balances of the employers in Minnesota will also help keep these nurses accountable to Minnesota's practice standards through their own competencies and education to maintain employment in these facilities.

The Institute of Medicine's report dated October 2010 speaks to health care reform and every nurse working to the full scope of their license and the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) through this compact can help standardize nursing practice in the compact states to help bring all states to the level of exceptional care that we already deliver here in Minnesota. With Minnesota part of the compact we will have a say in how this moves forward instead of sitting in the background and not becoming an active participant that can make sure we achieve the standards we believe are exceptional.

We also believe that the Board of Nursing has researched the compact with due diligence and is presenting this bill with intent that this will help protect the public health and safety of Minnesotans.

Again we urge you to support this legislation. We apologize for not being here in person to testify in favor of the nurse compact but our lobbyist, Tara Erickson, is out on maternity leave. If you have questions for her, please don't hesitate to contact her at TaraErickson@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Deb Tauer
President
Minnesota Licensed Practical Nurses Association