



February 21, 2020

The Honorable Senator John M. W. Moorlach (SD-37)  
State Capitol, Room 2048  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: In Support of SB 1053 Nurse Licensure Compact

Dear Senator Moorlach,

As the California Association of Colleges of Nursing (CACN) Board of Directors, we are the voice for baccalaureate and graduate nursing education in California and as an organization, are in full support of the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC). The CACN membership consists of 52 public and private colleges and universities throughout the state of California.

#### **Increasing Access to Nursing Care and Nursing Expertise**

By increasing licensed nurses' mobility with other compact states, we view the NLC as a viable way to address the healthcare needs in California's rural and metropolitan communities, especially during nursing shortages or natural disasters. Participation in the NLC will allow licensed nurses greater mobility to address California's nursing needs by allowing them to be physically present in providing care. Additionally, given the advances in telecommunication technologies, nurses can also utilize telehealth patient care delivery modalities as a part of the compact. While ensuring that all Californians have access to qualified nurses, NLC has provisions for monitoring, reporting, and holding nurses accountable for any criminal activity that they may be involved in. This type of screening is accomplished through the use of fingerprinting and other biometric information. Furthermore, participation in the NLC potentially allows expert nurse educators to reach nursing students via distance education modalities in participating NLC states if there is a State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement.

#### **Reducing Redundancies and Costs**

Participation in the NLC reduces the redundancy and cost for the individual nurse and state board licensing staff associated with submitting and processing documents required for nursing licensure. It is not only costly, it is time consuming and burdensome to gather and submit the application, college transcripts, and fingerprint evidence of an unencumbered current license. Reducing these redundant bureaucratic requirements not only benefits the nurses, it also reduces unnecessary workload for California BRN staff. By way of the NLC, we believe that the uniformity of nurse licensure requirements will enhance public safety and provide public health benefits, as has been the case for other states who are compact members.

#### **National Support for a Nurse Licensure Compact**

Significant work and support for the NLC has been accomplished by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) for many years. While California has been a national leader in many areas of healthcare, this is an area where we have lagged behind. California needs to join this effort to receive the benefits of the NLC national effort and assist with the ongoing development of NLC policies and procedures. CACN is concerned about the health and safety of Californians

## CACN Support Nurse Licensure Compact

and therefore, we are in full support of the NLC to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of and access to licensed nurses from all compact states.

Historically, the California BRN has not supported joining the NLC, based on concerns regarding loss of licensing revenues, safety concerns resulting from inconsistent background screening, and that other states do not have the same high educational standards California has because of BRN regulations. Given the greater priority of ensuring access to qualified nurses, any concern about a loss of revenue for the California BRN in conjunction with the implementation of the NLC is in gross misalignment with the California BRN's mandate to protect consumers. These safety concerns were addressed given background screening has been implemented through revisions the NLC implemented. As for the high standards of BRN regulations, unfortunately those regulations are antiquated, not evidence-based and have not been updated in years. The hallmark of assuring quality in higher education is through national accrediting bodies that are recognized by the US Department of Education. Noteworthy and unfortunately, the California BRN has resisted making national nursing accreditation a requirement for all California nursing programs despite encouragement to do so by the NCSBN's Model Rule that was to be in effect by January 2020. On a positive front, all CACN nursing programs are accredited by national nursing accreditation bodies and CACN attributes our outstanding student outcomes to the work of our faculty and these national accreditation standards. We therefore reject the premise that BRN regulations offer guidance or assurance about the quality of an academic nursing program. Concerns related to collective bargaining agreements are immaterial. By adopting the NLC we address a greater priority, specifically, ensuring Californians have access to qualified nurses to respond to nursing workforce shortages and the natural disasters that have become increasingly commonplace in our state. There has been longstanding national engagement from reputable nursing organizations supporting the NLC, including the NCSBN and AACN. The CACN Board of Directors believe that bringing the California BRN in alignment with NCSBN practices has many short-term and long-term benefits. With California actively participating as a member of the NLC, we anticipate there will be opportunities for our state to directly influence and enhance the evolution of this national effort. If CACN can be of assistance in helping with the legislative process, including providing testimony, please contact Dr. Scott R Ziehm, CACN President ([srziehm@usfca.edu](mailto:srzeihm@usfca.edu)). We thank you for your time and effort in introducing this important legislation that will protect and expand the scope of health benefits and the welfare of all Californians.

Sincerely,



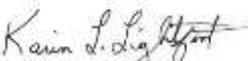
Scott R Ziehm, DNP, RN, CACN President



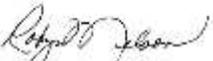
Mary Wickman, PhD, RN, CACN President-Elect



Leah Fitzgerald, PhD, FNP-BC, CACN Secretary



Karin L. Lightfoot, PhD, RN, CACN Member-at-Large I



Robyn Nelson, PhD, RN, CACN Member-at-Large II