

Model Legislative Testimony

Hello, my name is [Insert Name and organization]. I am testifying in support of [Insert Bill Number]. I would like to express my appreciation for your consideration of the Interstate Massage Compact, IMpact. This measure an initiative of the Department of Defense, The Council of State Governments, and Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards.

IMpact utilizes a “mutual recognition” model of interstate practice, whereby Compact member states agree to “recognize” valid licenses issued by other member states. To utilize the Compact, a massage therapist 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 IMpact. When a licensee wants to work in another member state (known as a “remote state”), the licensee obtains a “multistate license” from their home state. A multistate license is equivalent to a license to practice massage therapy in all remote member states.

IMpact preserves the regulatory authority of each compact member state to protect public health and safety through the existing state regulatory structure. Unlike national licensure initiatives that supersede state regulatory authority, interstate occupational licensure compacts allow a member state to continue to determine the requirements for licensure in that state, as well as to maintain that state’s unique scope of practice for all members of a profession practicing in that state, whether through a state-issued license or through a compact privilege.

We don’t anticipate substantial additional costs for states participating in the Compact. There may be a cost for additional software required to connect to the Compact’s interstate licensure data system as well as cost(s) associated with the attendance of your state’s chosen Commissioner to the annual in-person IMpact Commission meeting once the Compact is enacted in seven states.

IMpact would have many benefits for [State] including:

* Improving licensure portability for massage therapists;
* Improving access to massage therapy providers;
* Increasing choice of massage therapy providers;
* Improves continuity of care for the citizens of [State];
* Preserves the existing state-based licensure system;
* Improves communication between states:
  + Mandates full participation in a licensing and disciplinary data system
  + Ensures that all adverse actions and disciplinary sanctions are reported regularly to Commission and shared with member states;
  + Facilitates sharing of investigatory information
* Improves portability for military spouses:

According to the Department of Defense, Military families move every three years on average. The Compact helps military spouses relocate and begin work without delay by reducing the amount of time and effort needed to gain authorization to practice in a new state, even as compared to expedited licensure laws for military spouses. As a member of the Compact, [State] may become a more attractive option to call home for a military family with a massage therapist: military spouses will have peace of mind that with [State] as their home state, they will always be able to move to another IMpact member state without encountering barriers to practice.

Overall, IMpact will support military families, improve access to and continuity of care for [State] residents, and increase license portability for massage therapy professionals based in [State], while maintaining the current system of state licensure. Additionally, by ensuring the sharing of investigative and disciplinary information among member states, IMpact will allow member state regulatory entities to better protect the public.

