



New Mexico Senate Republican Office

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SENATOR GAY G. KERNAN
R - Hobbs - 42

Clock Ticking on Keeping Nurses in NM

12:59 p.m. deadline on 1-19-2018

Gay Kernan-R-Hobbs- Sponsor - Senate Minority Leader Stuart Ingle and Senator Howie Morales are co-sponsors.

SB1 w/ec- Nurse Licensure Compact

Santa Fe—One of the most anticipated issues whirling around the medical field is whether New Mexico will indeed pass legislation in time to keep nurses from having to leave the state. Joining the enhanced multi-state Nurse Licensure Compact (eNLC) by next Friday is critical so the many contracted, traveling nurses from out-of-state can continue practicing in New Mexico ; and the nurses licensed in New Mexico under the current compact will be able to join the enhanced compact without skipping a beat.

State Senator Gay who is the sponsor of SB1 said by the deadline of 12:59 p.m. on Friday, January 19 she fully expects the bill to be fast-tracked by the legislature and signed by the governor.

“This is vital to the health of New Mexicans. We need increased access to healthcare while we still maintain public protection through licensing that meets our state’s requirements. We don’t have enough nurses in New Mexico, so nurses from other states give us more access to care,” Senator Kernan said. **“There are a large number of traveling nurses who will be forced to leave their posts or obtain a New Mexico license if New Mexico does not join the enhanced compact by Friday’s deadline.”**

Nurses licensed in New Mexico under the current multi-state compact and working in one of the current 25 compact states will no longer be qualified to practice in a compact state unless New Mexico joins the updated compact.

The current Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) has been existence for 15 years. Through the NLC, Registered Nurses (RNs), and Licensed Practical/Vocational nurses (LPNs & VNs) may apply for a multi-state license and be given the privilege to practice in their home state and in the compact member states. Those nurses with the multi-state license need to meet a set of minimum requirements, regardless of the home state in which they are licensed. Senator Kernan emphasized the nurses in New Mexico can also choose to be solely licensed in New Mexico if they chose to remain in the state and do not need the multi-state license.

Now that most of the other 25 compact states have signed on to the enhanced license compact, it will become effective after January 19 with or without New Mexico.

New Mexico is one of three states from the current compact that has not signed on to the enhanced compact.

The benefits of the multi-state license include:

Enables nurses to practice in person or provide telehealth nursing services to patients located across the country without having to obtain additional licenses.

Allows nurses to cross state lines to a compact state to provide vital services in the event of a disaster, without having to obtain additional licenses.

The improvements to the enhanced compact include:

Requiring a background check on licensees; prohibits licensure if a nurse has a felon or a misdemeanor related to nursing; adds a dispute resolution process through a new Interstate Commission governing body; includes grandfathering of licenses from the prior compact.