

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. Senate Bill 115

PRINTER NO. 473

AMOUNT

See Fiscal Impact

FUND

Professional Licensure Augmentation
Account

DATE INTRODUCED

March 22, 2021

PRIME SPONSOR

Senator Boscola

DESCRIPTION

Senate Bill 115 establishes the Nurse Licensure Compact Act, which upon enactment makes the Commonwealth a party to the Nurse Licensure Compact (compact) with all other states that have joined the compact.

The purpose of the compact is to protect the health and safety of the public by expanding the mobility of nurses and the use of advanced communication technologies as part of the nation's health care delivery system in a uniform manner. Joining the compact will provide a multistate license to registered (RN) or licensed practical (LPN) nurses to practice as a RN or LPN under a multistate licensure privilege in each compact state. Compact states are required to participate in a coordinated licensure information system that includes information on the licensure and disciplinary history of each nurse to assist in the coordination of nurse licensure and enforcement efforts.

The legislation requires the head of the state licensing board or designee to be the administrator of the compact for Pennsylvania. The administrator of the compact holds one vote on the Interstate Commission of Nurse Licensure Compact Administrators (commission). The commission has the authority to promulgate uniform rules to facilitate and coordinate implementation and administration of the compact.

Under Senate Bill 115, the Department of State (department) is required to administer a criminal history background check on any resident nurse or practical/vocational nursed licensed in the Commonwealth who applies for a multistate license under the compact. The criminal history information shall solely be used to determine eligibility for a multistate license.

This act shall take effect in 60 days.

FISCAL IMPACT

The compact has been operational for over fifteen years, and to date, 35 states have enacted compact legislation.

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The commission has the authority to levy and collect an assessment from each compact member state or impose fees to cover the cost of operations and activities of the commission. Currently, the annual assessment paid by each compact member state is \$6,000, and the commission reports that there are no plans on raising the annual assessment in the immediate future. The department is able to accommodate this annual assessment within existing budget levels of the Professional Licensure Augmentation Account, which is \$56.7 million in FY 2020-21. Additionally, the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) has made available grant funding to compact member states to assist with any administrative expenses associated with implementation. The grants issued by NCSBN to compact member states have ranged from \$10,000 to \$500,000.

Joining the compact may result in the loss of revenue to the Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing. Licensees that currently hold multiple licenses in Pennsylvania and other compact states may choose to no longer renew their Pennsylvania license once the Commonwealth joins the compact, which could result in the loss of renewal fees. The amount of revenue loss will be dependent on the number of out-of-state nurses choosing not to renew their Pennsylvania licenses.

Member state licensing boards have the option to impose an additional fee for issuing a multistate license, which would offset any revenue loss from out-of-state renewals. The department has not determined if it will assess an additional fee for issuing the multistate license.