



**TESTIMONY OF  
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION  
SUBMITTED TO THE  
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE  
Monday, March 14, 2022**

**HB 5395, An Act Concerning An Expedited Licensure Process For Certain Out-Of-State Health Care Providers And Mental Health Care Providers**

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **HB 5395, An Act Concerning An Expedited Licensure Process For Certain Out-Of-State Health Care Providers And Mental Health Care Providers**. CHA supports the bill.

Since early 2020, hospitals and health systems have been at the center of Connecticut's response to the COVID-19 public health emergency, acting as a vital partner with the state and our communities. Hospitals expanded critical care capacity, procured essential equipment and supplies, and stood up countless community COVID-19 testing locations. Hospitals have been an essential component of the statewide vaccine distribution plan including efforts to reach and serve historically under-resourced communities disproportionately affected by the virus.

Connecticut hospitals and health systems face a significant and growing workforce shortage in many areas, especially in nursing, but also in the fields of behavioral health and respiratory care.

CHA was pleased to be a participant in the work groups to study licensure compacts. HB 5395 begins to move Connecticut in the direction of participation in interstate compacts. We request that as this bill moves forward the Public Health Committee considers how to ensure that the provisions related to a required background check do not become new hurdles in the licensure process—this should include consideration of funding. It is essential that the state set up and fund a background check system that provides easy access and timely processing of the newly required background checks for all applicants.

During the study process, CHA highlighted the need to address this issue and we were assured that this proposal would be matched with appropriate state funding to implement the measure. We encourage the Public Health Committee to ensure that funding is in place for the long term as it is imperative to the successful implementation of the legislation.

Participation in licensure compacts is one tool to address workforce shortage issues; participation in licensure compacts must be coupled with other steps to improve the education pipeline, support retention and recruitment, and improve opportunities for career advancement. We look forward to working with the committee on these important issues.

Thank you for your consideration of our position. For additional information, contact CHA Government Relations at (203) 294-7310.