

Testimony of

Shawn Frick
Chief Executive Officer
Community Health Center Association of Connecticut (CHC/ACT)

***Supporting
Governor's Bill 5058: An Act Adopting the Nurse Licensure Compact***

Public Health Committee
March 6, 2024

Thank you for the opportunity to provide support for Governor's Bill 5058, An Act Adopting the Nurse Licensure Compact.

On behalf of the Community Health Center Association of Connecticut (CHC/ACT), and its sixteen-member community health centers, I want to thank the Committee for its dedication to listening to Connecticut's residents about these important issues. Connecticut's community health centers serve more than 420,000 people each year, providing medical, behavioral health, and dental care in hundreds of locations across the state.

We stand with others in strong support of this bill, which is designed to address Connecticut's shortage of nurses and nursing faculty and improve access to care.

In 2022, Connecticut health centers employed 667 nurses, including LPNs, RNs, certified nurse midwives, and nurse practitioners. Collectively, these valued employees provided over 550,000 visits, including almost 90,000 virtual/telehealth visits.

Like other health care providers, FQHCs face a shortage of health care staff. Currently, there are dozens of open nursing positions at health centers across the state; these vacancies impact the number of patients that we can see.

We appreciate Governor Lamont's attention to this issue and support Connecticut joining the Nurse Licensure Compact, along with 41 other jurisdictions. Participating in the Compact will be a critical component to resolving the workforce shortage, improving access to care. It will also ease the burdens of maintaining multiple licenses and facilitate telehealth, as nurses will be able to practice in person or provide telehealth services to patients across the country without obtaining additional licenses. Finally, making it easier to practice in Connecticut may attract new people to our state, contributing to our communities and our economy.

Again, we hope the Committee will support this bill.

Thank you for your consideration and your hard work on behalf of our great state. Please feel free to reach out with any questions: sfrick@chcact.org or 860.667.7820.