

Submitter: Donna Graville
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2357

I am writing in support of passing this bill because it would allow better healthcare access for our patients without having to travel hours away to receive specialty services.

I live near the Washington border and work at Oregon Health and Science University. As a speech pathologist who provides tertiary care, I see many patients from Washington, Alaska, Idaho and Northern California. The need for an interstate compact is critical.

Patients travel hours to receive care. It is often difficult to find a speech pathologist who is trained in my specialty requiring patients to make the decision to travel at their own expense or go without care. Those who do come to OHSU for evaluation are unlikely to find a local speech pathologist to receive treatment. With the interstate compact, patients could be seen for treatment by the same speech pathologist who evaluated them, providing continuity of care thus improving healthcare outcomes.

With the interstate compact, on a wintery day like today, where all Oregon state offices are closed, patients could continue to receive care because they have access to a speech pathologist virtually. With the interstate compact patients with mobility or transportation challenges could receive care more consistently, thus improving patient healthcare outcomes.

So often, those in specialized care practice in urban settings. With the interstate compact, our reach to patients in need would expand exponentially. Expanded access to care means patients have more options to who they receive care from. An empowered patient improves health outcomes.

Finally, the interstate compact is a win, win proposition. Enacting the interstate compact does not cost the state of Oregon anything to implement; but the impact to healthcare access to Oregonians, especially rural Oregonians is tremendous. We will have a healthier Oregon with the passing of the interstate compact.