

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

To: Representative Rob Nosse
From: Emily Olson, OTR/L
Date February 14th, 2025
Subject: Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact/ HB 2357

Dear Representative Nosse,

I am writing to you as an occupational therapist residing and working in your constituency. I live in the Richmond Neighborhood and work at Randall Children's Hospital. I returned to Oregon in 2022 after spending seven years away, and in my role as a pediatric occupational therapist, I see firsthand the significant demand for therapy services for children in the Portland area—demand that far exceeds our current capacity.

As you may know, therapists often pursue this career not for financial gain, but because of our deep commitment to improving the lives of children and their families (I believe you can relate to this). However, the financial burden associated with maintaining multiple state licenses is a significant challenge. Many occupational therapists, including myself, are required to cover the costs of materials, continuing education, and license renewals out of pocket. For example, Legacy Health does not fund continuing education courses (which are required for license maintenance) or the renewal fees for state licenses. As a result, many clinicians opt to hold licenses in just one state, limiting their ability to practice across state lines and serve patients in need. I am also concerned that states already participating in the compact will become more attractive to emerging clinicians, which could exacerbate the shortage of therapists in Oregon and other states that are not yet part of the compact.

The Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact (HB 2357) represents a critical opportunity to address this issue. By enabling occupational therapists to practice in multiple states without requiring multiple licenses, this compact will improve access to care, reduce waitlists, improve telehealth options, and increase consumer choice—especially in rural areas. It will also help attract more clinicians to Oregon, strengthening the workforce and ensuring better care for all Oregonians.

I strongly urge you to support the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact/HB 2357. Thank you for your time and attention to this issue. I appreciate your service

and dedication to our community. I know you, too, do the work because you care. I hope to see you continue to support positive changes that reflect the needs and concerns of your constituents.

Sincerely,
Emily Olson