

Submitter: Jennifer Gray  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3351

## Written Testimony in Support of HB 3351: Enacting the Interstate Counseling Compact in Oregon

Dear Chair Nosse and Members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care,

My name is Jennifer Gray, and I am a Licensed Professional Counselor practicing in Portland, Oregon. I strongly support House Bill 3351, which would allow Oregon to join the Interstate Counseling Compact.

Many people I work with travel for work, relocate for family, or split time between states. The inability to provide care across state lines creates unnecessary disruptions when stability and support are most needed. This bill would ensure continuity of care, which is critical during major life transitions.

### How the Counseling Compact Would Benefit My Practice

I have seen how difficult it is for people to maintain therapy when they move. Some clients have had to stop care entirely or start over with a new provider, which can be frustrating, time-consuming, and disruptive to progress.

Additionally, I work with individuals who travel for personal and/or professional reasons and need short-term support during difficult or unexpected situations. Whether dealing with grief, family conflict, or high stress, they may need just one or two sessions to help manage the moment. However, because I am not licensed in the state they are visiting, I cannot provide care, and it's unrealistic for them to establish a new provider relationship for such a brief period. The Compact would allow them timely support from someone they already trust.

By joining the Counseling Compact, Oregon can:

- Expand Access to Care: Allowing licensed counselors from other states to practice in Oregon will increase the availability of mental health professionals, especially in underserved areas or who specialize in specific needs.
- Support Military Families and Relocated Clients: Those who move frequently, including military families, would benefit from continued access to their counselors without interruption.
- Provide Short-Term Support for Travelers: People traveling for personal reasons who face unexpected stressors could receive care from their established provider instead of delaying help or seeking a new counselor for just one or two sessions.
- Reduce Administrative Burdens: The Compact streamlines licensing, saving time

and resources for both practitioners and regulatory agencies.

-Maintain High Professional Standards: Participating states share disciplinary information to ensure quality and safety of care across state lines.

#### Why This Matters for My Clients

One of my clients, a single parent, had to move unexpectedly for family reasons. They were in the middle of processing significant personal challenges but had to stop therapy because I wasn't licensed in their new state. This bill would allow people in similar situations to continue care instead of starting over.

I've also had clients traveling who suddenly needed a session or two to navigate a difficult situation. Without the Compact, I'm unable to support them, even though I know their history and needs. This gap in care makes an already stressful situation harder to manage.

HB 3351 is a crucial step in expanding access to quality care and ensuring people get support when they need it. I encourage you to support this bill to improve Oregon's mental health system and make essential services more accessible.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer A. Gray, LPC

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