

Senate Public Health and Welfare

March 21, 2018

Proponent Testimony on HB 2496 – Enacting the Nurse Licensure Compact

By ARJ Infusion Services, Inc.

ARJ Supports HB 2496

ARJ Infusion Services is a national specialty home infusion provider based in Lenexa, KS, with offices in Wichita, KS; Hanston, KS; Cedar Rapids, IA; Omaha, NE; and St Louis, MO. ARJ provides high-quality, high-touch infusion therapies to patients with a variety of rare, chronic medical conditions. Our business utilizes a combination of highly skilled nurses and pharmacists, working in tandem with prescribing physicians, to care for patients in the comfort and convenience of their homes. ARJ employs over 100 people across our service area, with 78 employees residing in Kansas.

ARJ rises in support of HB 2496, a bill that will enact the Nurse Licensure Compact (Compact) in the State of Kansas. Implementation of the Compact is a vital health care and economic development tool for Kansas.

Over the last decade, significant changes have occurred in the delivery of health care. Current demographic trends require a comprehensive home-based model of health care in order to adapt to the needs of an aging population. To accomplish this, health care companies must innovate, realign and expand their resources to fit the needs for high-quality patient care. Often, the care delivered to patients in their home, whether in person or telephonically, is provided by a nurse.

Currently, the Compact consists of 29 states, with nine additional states either considering legislation or having passed it and are pending implementation. If Kansas should fail to pass this legislation, then it would be one of only 10 states in the continental United States, and one of the only states in the Midwest, not in the Compact.

ARJ provides services to patients in nearly all of the existing Compact states. While we do provide hands-on infusion therapy by registered nurses in the home, much of our clinical support and coordination is provided by nurses telephonically.

Our telephonic nurses, called Patient Care Coordinators, are required to hold licenses in all states in which they communicate with patients. The cost to ARJ to obtain licenses for a Kansas “resident” nurse in all of the Compact states where we currently have patients is nearly \$3500 for the first year and \$1800 annually, per nurse. As a Kansas-based business, it is our desire to employ Kansas employees whenever possible. However, given our proximity to the Kansas-Missouri state line, it makes economic sense for ARJ to recruit Missouri-based nurses, which puts Kansas nurses at a disadvantage.

ARJ is a rapidly growing company. By the end of 2018, we anticipate hiring an additional eight to ten Patient Care Coordinators to provide clinical support to our patients. If Kansas is the only state in which

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we are located that is not a Compact state, then it makes economic sense to place these growth positions at our Missouri, Nebraska or Iowa facilities. This impedes ARJ's ability to do our part to help Kansas grow.

Passage of the Compact legislation, and prompt implementation by the Kansas Board of Nursing, is critical to allowing Kansas to remain competitive in a rapidly changing health care environment; one that now relies more heavily on telephonic and remote support of patients.

Thank you for considering this very important issue that impacts nurses, patients and employers. We ask that the committee move forward with adopting HB 2496, the "Nurse Licensure Compact".

Respectfully submitted,
Andy Copeland
Vice President/General Manager
ARJ Infusion Services

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