



May 3, 2024

House Finance Committee  
House Bill 149 Public Testimony

Co-Chairs Edgmon, Johnson, Foster, and members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. For the record, my name is Kati Capozzi and I serve as the president and CEO of the Alaska Chamber. I testify today in support of House Bill 149.

The Alaska Chamber is Alaska's largest statewide business advocacy organization. Our mission is to promote a healthy business environment in Alaska. The Chamber has more than 700 members and represents businesses of all sizes and industries from across the state, representing 58,000 Alaskan workers and \$4.6 billion in annual wages.

The Chamber has a formal policy position to support joining the multistate Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC). And in fact, according to a statewide public opinion survey conducted just last week, we learned that 86% of Alaskans surveyed also support joining the NLC. There was broad consensus among every demographic in the state; among party lines, among geographic boundaries, and even among union and private sector employees.

As you know, the NLC is an agreement between states that allows nurses to have a single license to practice in any state that is a member of the compact. There are currently 39 states and jurisdictions that participate in the compact, and it's the Chamber's hope Alaska becomes the 40<sup>th</sup>.

Alaska is projected to have the highest nurse vacancies in the United States by 2030 with over 5,000 openings. Alaska is already struggling to keep up with demand for nurses, which requires filling over 1,500 job openings annually. By allowing increased efficiency without lowering standards for nurses to obtain licensure in Alaska, the NLC will increase the pool of qualified candidates to fill critical vacancies, at a time when we need it most.

The healthcare sector outpaces all other sectors in Alaska in attracting nonresidents that ultimately become residents to our state. Joining the NLC will reduce delays in the licensure process, which are a known barrier for nurses who are looking to start their careers in or move to Alaska. Lastly, Alaska is also home to thousands of active duty and transitioning military members, many with spouses and family who are licensed nurses. By joining the NLC, it will help these individuals transition into our healthcare workforce.

In closing, the Chamber supports HB149 and encourages this committee to pass this straightforward and good for business bill. Thank you for considering the Alaska Chamber's comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kati Capozzi'.

Kati Capozzi  
President and CEO



2550 Denali Street, Suite 530  
Anchorage, AK 99503



Office (907) 278-2722



[www.alaskachamber.com](http://www.alaskachamber.com)  
[info@alaskachamber.com](mailto:info@alaskachamber.com)