

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1731
By: Campos
Public Health
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Physician Assistant Licensure Compact is an interstate occupational licensure compact for PAs that are constitutionally authorized, legally binding, and legislatively enacted contracts among participating states. Under this compact, a state agrees to recognize valid, unencumbered licenses issued by another member state. Physician assistants using a compact privilege to practice in another state must adhere to laws and regulations of practice in that state and are under the jurisdiction of the applicable regulatory board of the state in which they are practicing. The bill author has informed the committee that Texas already belongs to several other occupational licensure compacts, including physicians, nurses, physical therapists, psychologists, and emergency medical personnel. C.S.H.B. 1731 seeks to continue the success of these other interstate compacts and to facilitate this licensure "privilege to practice" model for PAs by enacting and entering into the Physician Assistant Licensure Compact with all other applicable jurisdictions to enhance the portability of a license to practice as a PA while safeguarding the safety of patients.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Physician Assistant Board in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1731 amends the Occupations Code to enact and enter into the Physician Assistant Licensure Compact with all other applicable jurisdictions to enhance the portability of a license to practice as a physician assistant (PA) while safeguarding the safety of patients. The bill sets out the compact's provisions, including provisions relating to the following:

- the purpose and intent of the compact;
- applicable definitions and individual state participation in the compact;
- the manner in which an individual who currently holds an unrestricted license from a state to provide medical services as a PA may exercise privileges under the compact, including designating the participating state from which the licensee is applying for a compact privilege and expressly subjecting the PA to the laws of the state in which a PA exercises the compact privilege;
- the authority of a participating state and a remote state to take adverse actions against a PA, including participating in joint investigations of PAs;
- the establishment of the PA Licensure Compact Commission as an instrumentality of the compact states acting jointly and the commission's governance structure, powers and duties, rulemaking, financing, and liability for certain claims;

- the development, maintenance, operation, and utilization of a coordinated data and reporting system containing licensure, adverse action, and certain investigative information on all licensed PAs and applicants denied a license in participating states;
- the commission's rulemaking authority;
- oversight, dispute resolution, and enforcement of compact provisions by applicable state governments and courts;
- the process for amending or withdrawing from the compact; and
- the construction and severability of the compact's provisions, as well as the binding effect of the compact and other state laws.

The compact takes effect on the date on which the compact statute is enacted into law in the seventh participating state. The bill designates the Texas Physician Assistant Board as the administrator of the compact in Texas and authorizes the board to adopt rules necessary to implement the bill's provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.

COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 1731 may differ from the introduced in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute does not include a requirement present in the introduced for a participating state to require continuing education for PA license renewal.

The substitute includes the following provisions absent from the introduced with respect to the manner in which an individual who currently holds an unrestricted license from a state to provide medical services as a PA may exercise privileges under the compact:

- establishes that, for each state in which a PA exercises the compact privilege, the PA is subject to applicable state laws that establish, restrict, or otherwise regulate the medical services a PA may perform, including any requirements concerning physician delegation and supervision, collaboration, and any prescribing authority requirements; and
- establishes that a PA is not authorized by the compact to perform a medical service in violation of state laws in which a PA exercises compact privileges.