

CAPITOL RESEARCH

● ● ● INTERSTATE COMPACTS

Update from CSG's National Center for Interstate Compacts

Interstate Compact for the Siting of Electric Transmission Lines

Overview:

The siting of interstate transmission lines has long been a vexing problem for both states and the federal government. With the expected growth in electricity demand, coupled with the need to bring renewable energy to market and to enhance and secure the nation's energy infrastructure, added transmission capacity is even more important than ever.

The Council of State Governments' National Center for Interstate Compacts, in conjunction with a group of subject matter experts, has developed an electric transmission line siting compact. The compact is intended to improve efficiencies and create standardization during the siting process by establishing common applications, predetermined timelines and uniform public comment periods. The compact and its requirements would be triggered on an ad hoc basis and pertain only to those states that are both members of the compact and impacted by the proposed line.

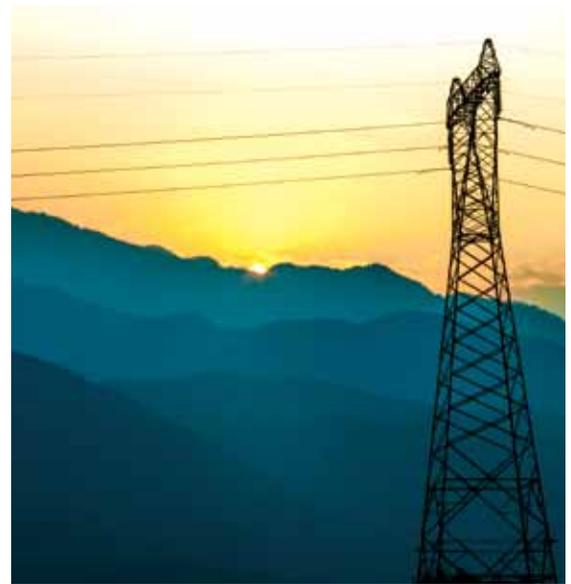
Status:

Compact language is complete and the draft has been shared with federal officials as well as interested stakeholder groups for comment and review. Compact language also is ready for state consideration. Staff from CSG's headquarters is working with CSG West to convene a legislative briefing on the compact in conjunction with the Western regional meeting in Las Vegas, July 30-Aug. 2, 2013. Learn more about the Transmission Line Siting Compact at www.csg.org/NCIC/TransmissionLineSitingCompact.aspx.

State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement

Overview:

Despite the growing popularity and increasing convenience online classes offer students, state and federal laws have not kept pace with the rapid expansion of online course offerings. Over the past two decades, states have adopted numerous approaches to authorize and regulating online higher education, which



has limited student access and created an inconsistent regulatory process for institutions seeking approval to operate in multiple states.

The State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) is intended to streamline the authorization process for institutions wishing to engage in distance education. The agreement establishes minimum standards for state and institutional participation and shifts the responsibility of authorization to the home state of the institution. While these changes represent a significant difference in the traditional authorization model for distance learning programs, institutions, states and students could benefit substantially if consensus can be achieved.

Status:

SARA was developed as a joint effort between the Presidents' Forum, The Council of State Governments, the Commission on Regulation of Postsecondary Distance Education and the four regional higher education compacts—the Midwestern Higher Education Compact, the New England Board of Higher Education, the Southern Regional Education Board and the Western Interstate Commission for



Higher Education. The language is nearly complete and ready for state consideration. Additionally, CSG and the Presidents' Forum, with sponsorship from the Lumina Foundation, provided officials from 47 states an opportunity to learn about the agreement in April and to begin to consider the next steps required for state participation in the voluntary agreement. Learn more about the agreement at www.csg.org/NCIC/MultiStateDistanceEducationReciprocityCompact.aspx.

EMS Licensure Compact

Overview:

States have had the authority to license emergency medical services personnel since the 1970s. While federal government frequently provides resources and assistance to states in developing licensing protocols, states issue licenses based on individual state practices, procedures and requirements.

The EMS industry has undergone much change since the 1970s. It is becoming increasingly more common for emergency services personnel to cross state lines to provide services in nondeclared states of emergency. This increased level of interstate movement and cooperation has placed a renewed emphasis on how emergency personnel are licensed to ensure that they are not being accused of practicing medicine in a state in which they are not technically licensed. As a result, the need for a universal means of assuring a legal, accountable and geographically consistent method of licensing emergency services personnel is growing.

Status:

Compact center staff has been working with the National Association of State EMS Officials to explore a multi-state licensure compact. During two advisory committee meetings, members discussed issues such as the challenges surrounding EMS

licensing, financing of the agreement and Congressional Consent. The drafting team is scheduled to meet for the first time in June and will likely take approximately eight months to finish the draft. Learn more about the EMS Licensure Compact at www.nasemso.org/Projects/InterstateCompacts/index.asp.

Medical Licensing Compact Concept

Overview:

Research published by the Annals of Family Medicine estimates the United States will need an additional 52,000 primary care physicians by 2025 to keep up with growing demands on the health care system.

Health care providers must obtain multiple state licenses and adhere to different sets of regulations if they choose to practice telemedicine across state lines or wish to practice in multiple states. These existing laws frequently serve as a major roadblock to providing patients with high quality health care across state lines. This is especially true for patients being treated in emergency situations or needing highly specialized treatment that may be hard to find.

Status:

One solution to this problem may be a medical licensing compact that would streamline the process for doctors wishing to practice in multiple states and in turn, would promote license portability. CSG, in partnership with the Federation of State Medical Boards, is committed to continuing to assess the feasibility of such an agreement and will begin formal work on the compact this summer.



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