SAY:
The Stuttering Association for the Young
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January 21, 2020

Dan Logsdon
Director, National Center for Interstate Compacts, The Council of State Governments
1776 Avenue of the States
Lexington, KY 40511

Dear Mr. Logsdon,

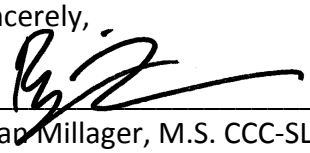
I am writing to express my support for an interstate compact for licensure in speech-language pathology. In my work with a national non-profit organization for young people who stutter (*SAY: The Stuttering Association for the Young*), I have worked to provide qualified stuttering treatment to children and their families around the country. At present, however, the biggest barrier to meeting the therapy needs of many families is the unreasonable burden of securing licensure in multiple states. We need a new system to address these issues.

I will further illustrate my own example. For many people who stutter in America, non-profit support-group programs like SAY are a critical hub for connecting people who stutter with each other, as well as with professionals who have the necessary experience to treat them. At our annual summer camp, for example, we meet dozens of children every year who have never met anyone else who stutters. And most of them do not have local access to a speech therapist with adequate experience treating stuttering. So when they return home from Camp SAY, online telepractice (with me or another stuttering specialist) is often the only way they can access ongoing treatment for their quality of life and communication needs.

In order to legally and ethically work with these families from all over the country, I have had to obtain licensure in 13 states. This has become an unreasonable and untenable burden of time, logistics, and finances. My organization – again, a non-profit – pays hundreds of dollars a year to maintain licenses on my behalf. Each state has its own expiration dates, continuing education requirements, and legal particulars to keep track of. And with each additional state I might wish to add, the costs would grow exponentially, to the point where I can no longer afford to add additional licenses. So although I have access to far more of the country than most clinicians, I must still refuse help to many of the families I meet if I wish to abide by ASHA's regulations and state laws.

Most state laws, as currently written, are inadequate to meeting the needs of clients in an increasingly interconnected and specialized world. I know that I am not alone in experiencing these challenges, and the interstate compact represents a plausible solution that could benefit consumers and providers alike. Thank you for your efforts and advocacy.

Sincerely,



Ryan Millager, M.S. CCC-SLP