

## Lou Mansolillo

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**From:** Pratt, Bethany <bpratt@neit.edu>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 25, 2024 10:06 AM  
**To:** House Corporations Committee  
**Cc:** Rep. McNamara, Joseph M.  
**Subject:** Occupational Therapy Interstate Licensure Compact

### H7945- PRO

March 25, 2024

Dear Chairperson Solomon and Members of the House Corporations Committee,

Thank you for your service.

My name is Bethany Pratt, and I am a professor of Occupational Therapy at New England Institute of Technology, as well as a clinician at an out-patient pediatric clinic in Warwick. I have worked in Rhode Island for over 25 years in a variety of settings, including skilled nursing, community mental health, and school-based practice.

I am writing in support of H7945 The Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my view on this important legislation.

I believe this bill is good for RI. It will:

- streamline the application process for those seeking practice privileges in other states through a centralized system
- allow greater mobility for Occupational Therapy providers between states or working in more than one state
- Support military members who are relocating or others who change their primary state of residence frequently
- Facilitate options for telehealth for those in more rural areas or who are homebound or living in border communities in our nearby states
- improve information sharing among member states in regulating Occupational Therapy practice
- preserve Rhode Island's current licensure law, rules and regulations, and authority over Occupational Therapy practice

The Occupational Therapy Compact has the potential to address the workforce crisis in health care by making it easier to obtain a privilege to practice in RI. It supports providers and encourages talented individuals to become part of Rhode Island's rehabilitation team.

More importantly it will offer increased access to needed Occupational Therapy Services for our clients.

In my personal experience, I have seen how the OT compact legislation act has provided various employment opportunities for Rhode Islanders, specifically to those who live near bordering states. I am currently attempting to hire an Occupational Therapy Practitioner (OTP) that would be able to work in our RI clinic, as well as our MA clinic. We have been extremely limited in our applicants due to the added cost of obtaining dual licenses, which is approximately an additional \$200.00 per state.

So far 28 States have enacted OT compact legislation. 7 have introduced legislation, and several others are considering or beginning to introduce legislation including our neighbors in the Tri-State area and New England.

Please help us to make Rhode Island the 29<sup>th</sup> state by approving H7945.

Thank you for your consideration,

Bethany Pratt



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