UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

DoD-State Liaison

Dr. Thomas Langdon
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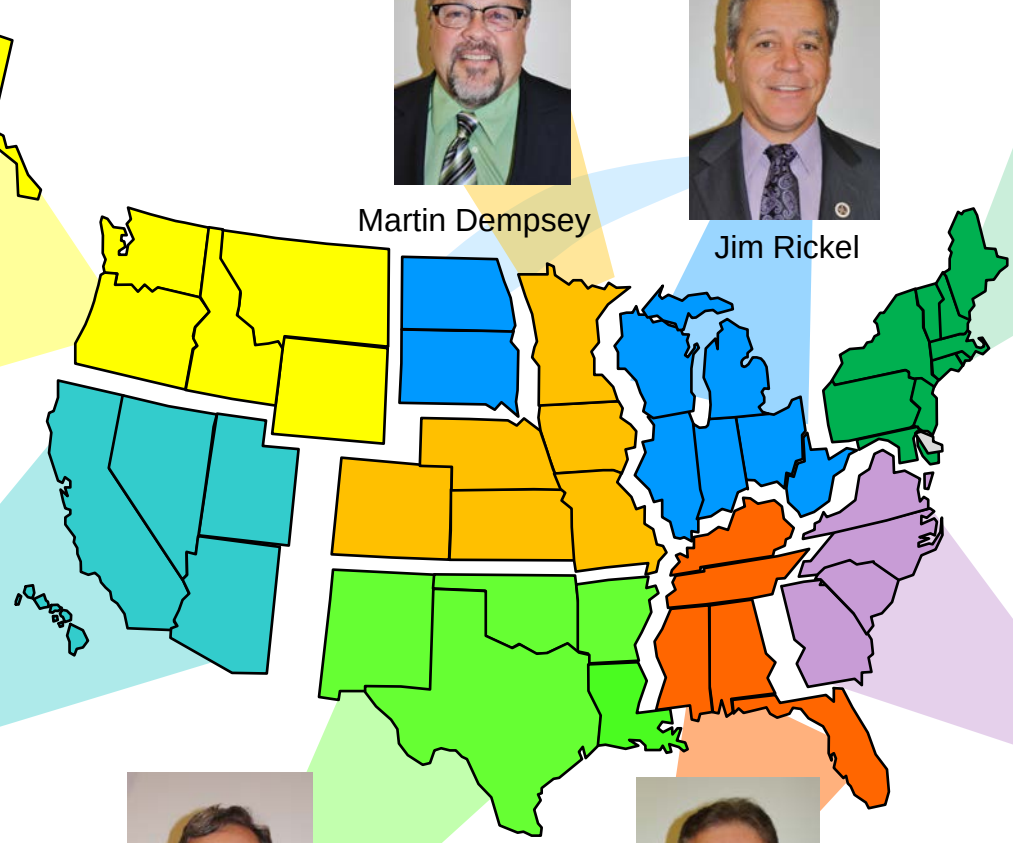
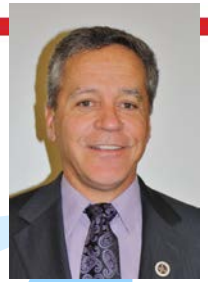
DoD – State Liaison Function

- Established by the USD(P&R) in 2004
- Mission is to:
  - Alleviate barriers in state policy Service members and their families face as a result of military life
  - Harmonize differences in state and federal laws impacting P&R policies
- Accomplish mission through "ERA" with state policymakers
  - **Educate** about the issues, build **Relationships**, and **Assist** when asked
  - Provide 'best practice' language and arrange for testimony and supplemental information
  - We don't lobby – no 'grass roots' campaigning for specific pieces of legislation
- Staff of eleven
  - Two in DC, a Senior State Liaison and 8 Regional Liaisons

Regional Staff



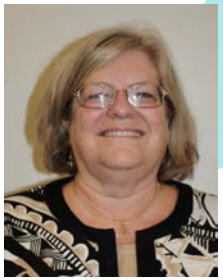
Martin Dempsey



Jim Rickel

Harold Cooney

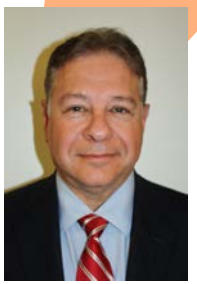
Mark San Souci



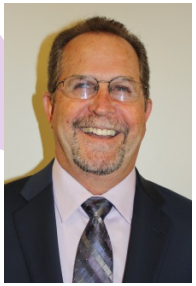
Laurie Crehan

Thomas Hinton
Senior State Liaison

Dale Vande Hey

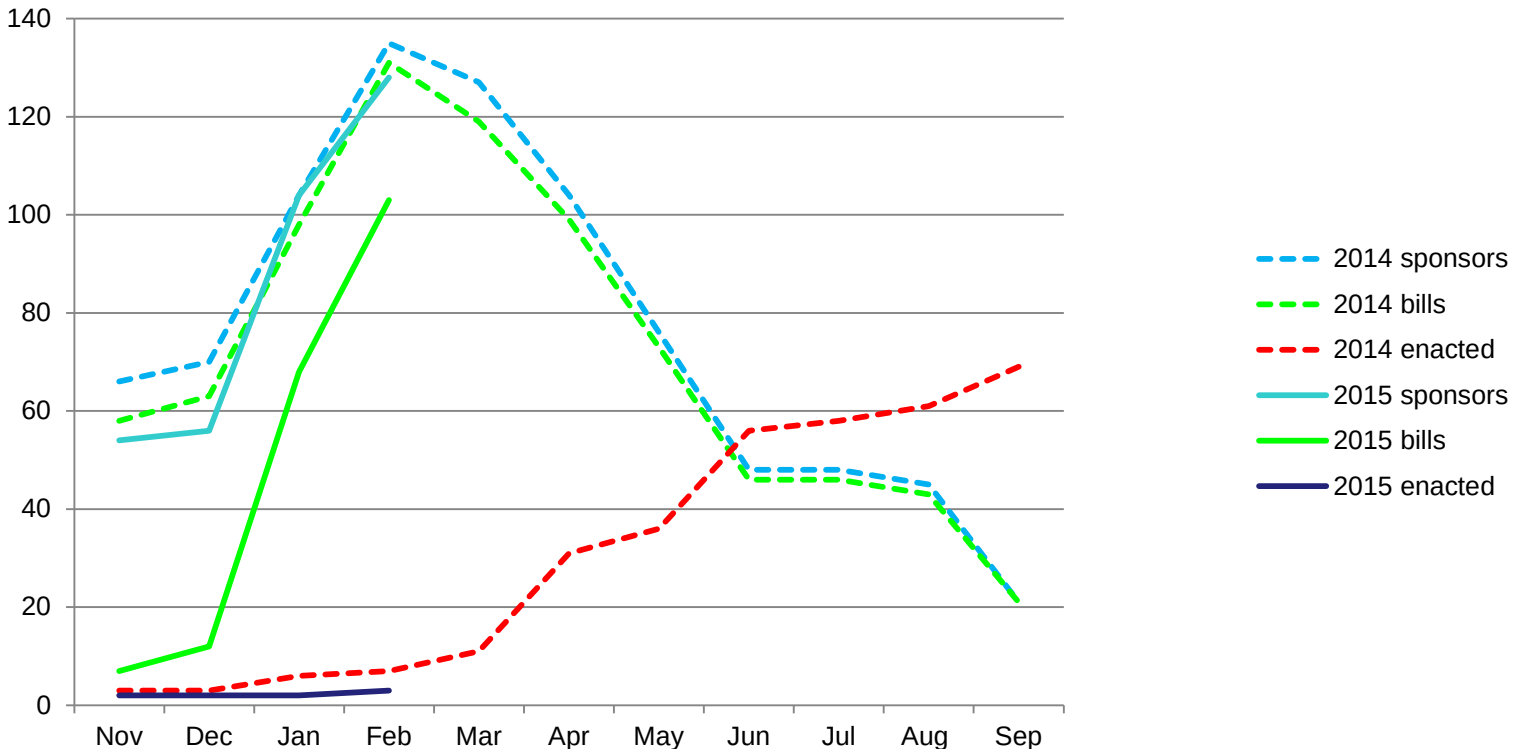


Eric Sherman



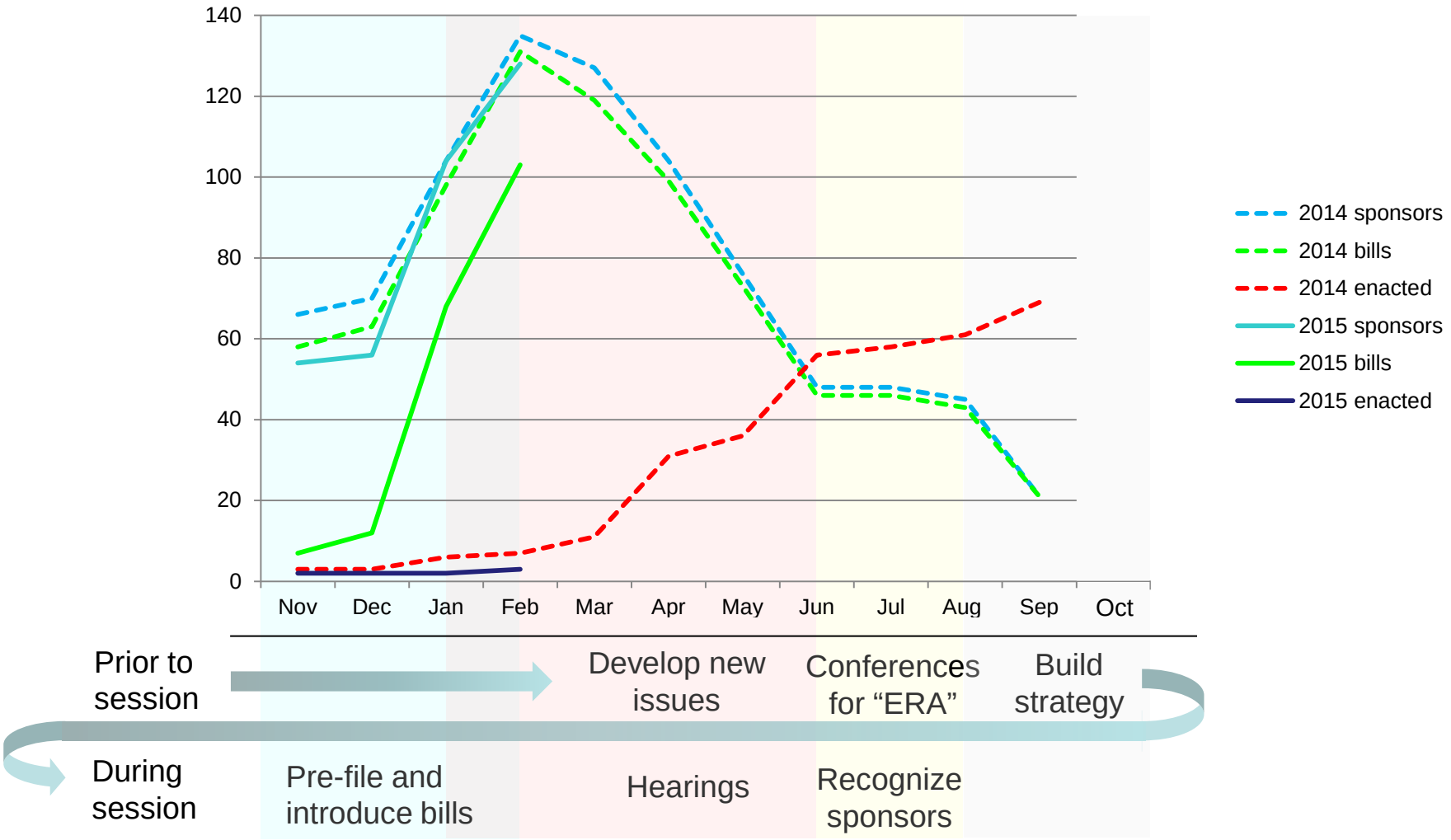
Kevin Bruch

Legislative Experience



- Average of 81 bills enacted each year over the past 5 years
- Cycle repeats itself annually – DSLO work follows this cycle

Legislative Cycle



Key Issues

- Can cover anything in the P&R portfolio and any aspect of state policy
  - Covered issues important to White House, Joining Forces, Casualty Affairs, Suicide Prevention, Legal Policy, Office of Special Needs, Family Advocacy, DoDEA, Military Services, Reserve Affairs, Readiness and Training, Transition Policy
  - Engaged in consumer protection, family law, education, health policy, unemployment compensation, professions and occupations, social services, judicial policies and National Guard policies
- Issues are reviewed annually to bring most significant to states

Developing the Key Issues List

	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
External Organizations	Request input on potential issues		Analyze input					
P&R Organizations		Poll contributing DoD agencies to create a priority list						
Military Services, Joint Staff and National Guard Bureau					Develop a straw-man list from priorities			
General Council, MC&FP and R&FM					Staff, coordinate and obtain approval		Begin developing strategy	

2015 Issues

- Assign an identifier for military children in education data systems
- Allow private sector employers to offer hiring preference to veterans
- Provide authority for establishing Veteran Treatment Courts (VTCs)
- Employment protections during state sponsored activation
- Facilitate licensure and academic credit for military education, training and experience
- Allow earned priority for receiving Medicaid home and community care waivers
- **Facilitate military spouse transition through licensure portability**
- Clarify relationship between civilian and military authorities for child advocacy
- **Ensure deployment separation does not determine child custody decisions**
- Promote consumer protections and enforcement of the predatory lending regulation
- **Increase access to quality, affordable childcare for military families**
- Comport state laws with DoD rules on disposition
- Support for Caregivers of Disabled Veterans
- State licensing exemption for distance education under DoD MOU

Facilitate Military Spouse Transition – Licensure Portability

Issue: Frequent moves & difficult licensing procedures = stunted careers

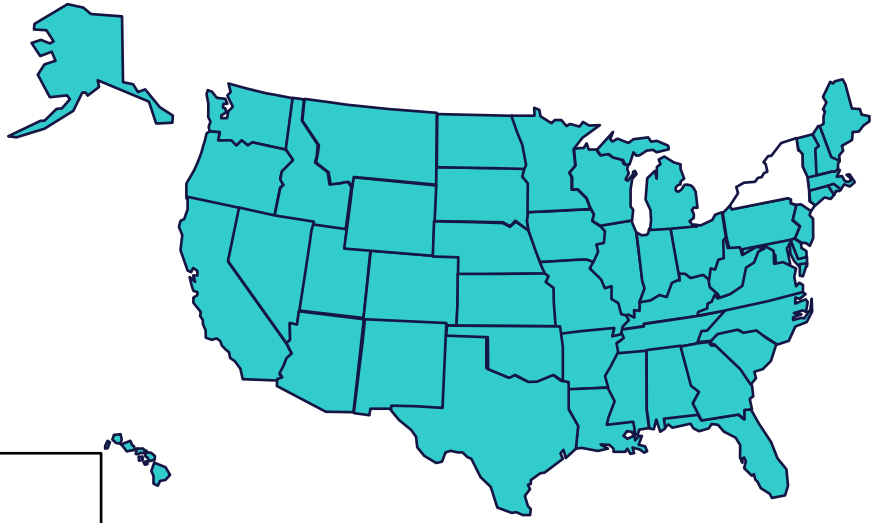
State Strategy:

- Focused on majority of occupations favored by military spouses
- Reduce employment delay through:
  - Licensing by endorsement - alternatives to current experience for competency
  - Providing temporary licenses with minimal documentation
  - Allow for streamlined approvals

License by endorsement	34
Temporary license	44
Expedited process	34

2015 status:

Sponsors	Bills	States	Governor Signed
6	6	4	0



Legend:
Enacted legislation
Not yet enacted legislation

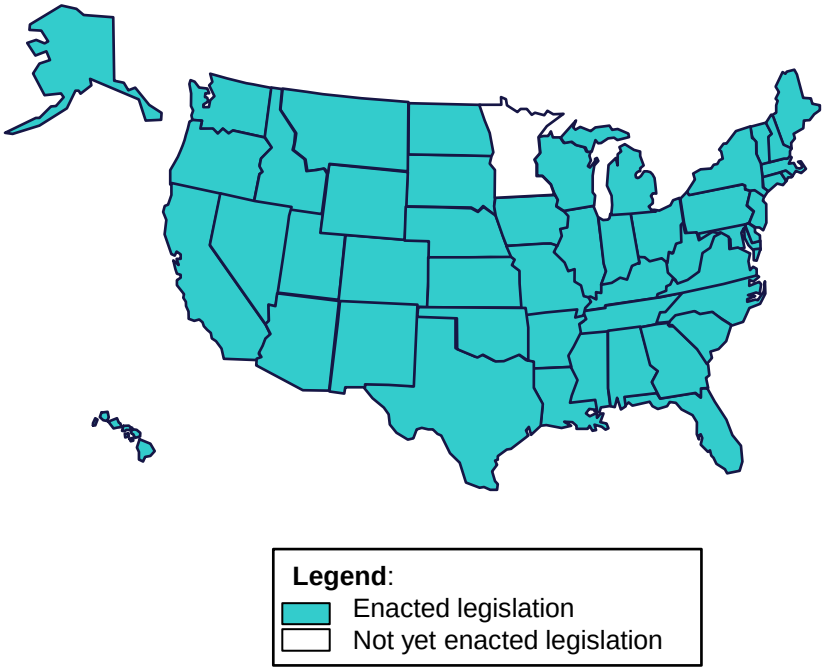
Child Custody

- Military families engage in same legal procedures as all other families
- Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) provides temporary suspension of legal and administrative procedures
- Custody laws differ by state, but have common principles
  - Best interest of the child
  - Degree of emotional attachment and preferences of the child
  - Parental factors – involvement in parenting, stability
- In the past, custody law principles have not necessarily accommodated the demands of military service
  - DoD has worked with American Bar Association, Uniform Law Commission and State governments to develop accommodations

Child Custody/Visitation Impact on Service Members

State Strategy: Legislatures appropriately balance the interests of SMs who are absent due to military service with the best interests of the child

Sub-Issues Covered	States
Military absence not sole basis	45
No permanent order for military absence	43
Reinstate custody order upon return	36
Delegate visitation rights	36
Expedite hearing	38
Electronic testimony	34



Uniform law (Deployed Parents Custody and Visitation Act) enacted in 7 states

2015 status:

Sponsors	Bills	States	Governor Signed
7	5	3	0

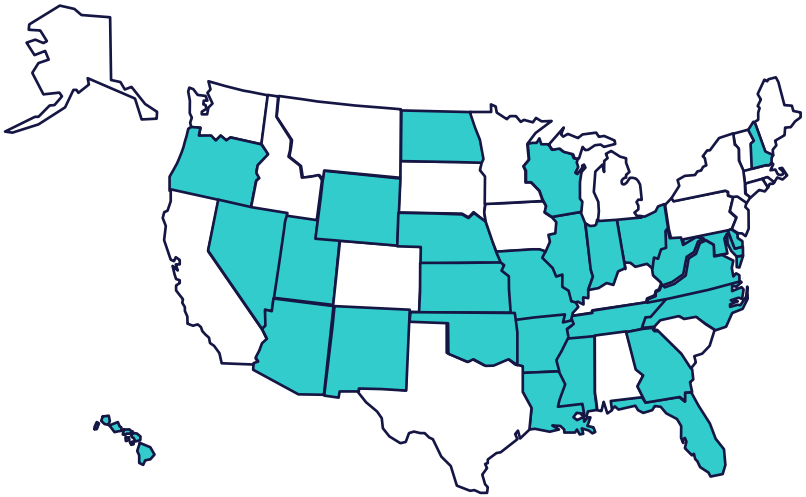
Other Applicable Laws

- Section 566 of the FY 2015 NDAA, amending the SCRA
  - Limits court's consideration of deployment as sole factor in determining the best interest of the child
  - Does not create a Federal right of action
- Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act
  - Uniform state law accepted by nearly all states
  - Provides uniform determination of state of jurisdiction for custody cases and authority for enforcement of custody orders

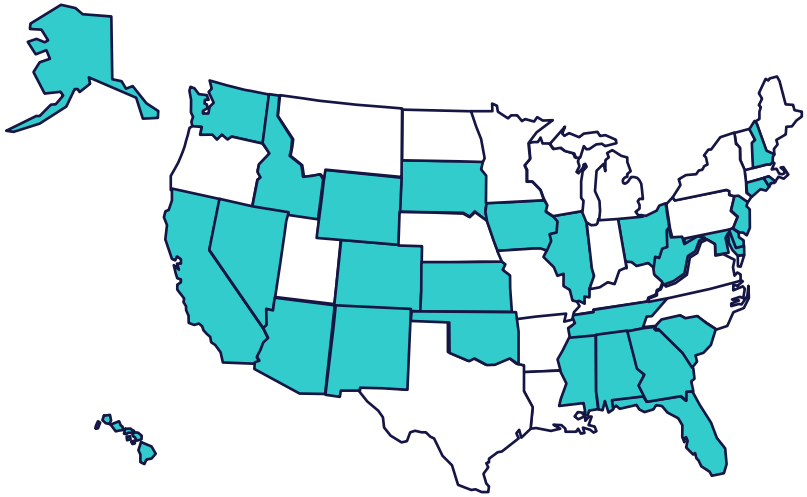
Increase Quality, Affordable Childcare

State Strategy: Work with state governments to align state childcare rating systems with DoD Childcare Effectiveness Rating and Improvement System (ERIS)

- Request enabling legislation: annual state evaluation and background investigations



Annual Inspections



Background Checks

2015 status:

Sponsors	Bills	States	Governor Signed
8	8	7	0

Legend:
Enacted legislation
Not yet enacted legislation

Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children

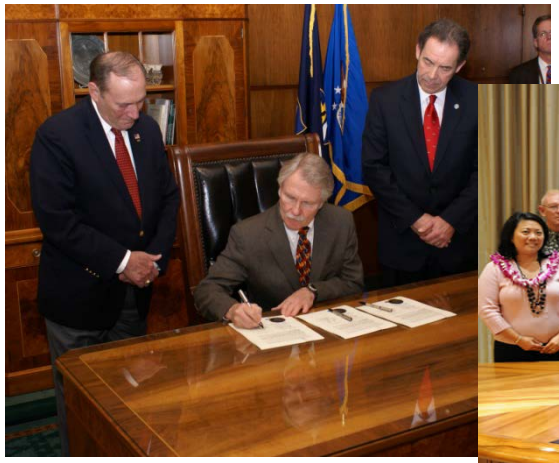
- School transition has been a long-standing issue
  - DoD, Army and Military Child Education Coalition studies
- DSLO worked with the Council of State Governments to develop an interstate compact
  - 2006 - 2007, 18 stakeholders developed issues and proposed policies
  - 2008, started approaching states; enactment in 11 states in first year (10 required to activate the compact)
  - 2014, obtained enactment in all 50 states

Compact Provisions

- Compact covers:
  - **Eligibility:** Attend school outside of the LEA (without tuition) as a result of a parent mobilizing/deploying; opportunity to compete to participate in extracurricular activities
  - **Enrollment:** Education records; immunizations; kindergarten entrance age
  - **Placement:** Course and education program placement; special education services; waive course requirements; excused absences associated with mobilization/deployment of parent
  - **Graduation:** Course requirement waivers; exit exam flexibility; transfer during senior year
- **Establishes oversight Commission:**
  - Commissioner from each state
  - State Councils with military representatives as liaisons

Compact Status

- States at various stages of:
  - Assigning Commissioners and establishing Councils
  - Establishing internal policies
  - Educating School Districts
- DoD has been and is continuing to:
  - Designate military representatives to the State Councils
  - Promote the Compact to military families, explaining what it does and does not do
  - Promote and educate Military Service School Liaison Officers
    - Outreach to military families
    - Roll in assisting military families with issues associated with the Compact



www.USA4MilitaryFamilies.dod.mil

Goal is to partner with states to help our members and their families!

Issue Status

Issue	Sub-Issues and Number of States Responding to Date			
Military ID	11			
Private Sector Vet Hiring Protection	12			
VTC 39	Focus on treatment	Open selection	Maximize coverage	
	39	32	21	
NG Employment Protection	Private right of action	Out-of-state protection		
	35	13		
Separating SM Licensure 49	Licensing credit for military education	Extension of license while on active duty	Endorsement of existing license	Academic credit for military education
	42	36	20	33
Medicaid Waivers	5			
Spouse License 48	License by endorsement	Temporary license	Expedited processes	
	33	44	35	
Child Advocacy	0			

Issue Status

Issue	Sub-Issues and Number of States Responding to Date					
Child Custody 49	Military absence not sole basis	No permanent order for mil absence	Reinstate custody order upon return	Delegate visitation rights	Expedite hearing	Electronic testimony
	45	43	36	36	38	32
Consumer Protection	Enforcement of the Military Lending Act			Information sharing through FTC		
	37			31		
Quality Child Care 41	Annual inspections			Background checks		
	28			30		
Disposition of Remains	45					
Caregiver Support	Not rated					
Distance Ed	28					

Regional Liaison Contact Information

Liaison	States within Region	Phone	Email
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