



Arnold I. Palacios
Governor

David M. Apatang
Lieutenant Governor

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

10 JAN 2025

GOV2025-159

The Honorable Edith E. Deleon Guerrero
President of the Senate
Twenty-Third Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

The Honorable Edmund S. Villagomez
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Third Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Madame President and Mr. Speaker:

This is to inform you that I have signed into law **Senate Bill No. 23-67, SS1**, entitled, "To allow the Health Care Professions Licensing Board to promulgate regulations for the licensing physicians licensed to practice in a foreign country; and for other purposes," which was passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Twenty-Third Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

This bill becomes **Public Law No. 23-33**. Copies bearing my signature are forwarded for your reference.

Sincerely,


ARNOLD I. PALACIOS
Governor

cc: Lieutenant Governor; Attorney General; Commonwealth Law Revision;
Public Auditor; CEO, CHCC; Health Care Professions Licensing Board;
Acting Special Assistant for Administration; Programs and Legislative Review Office



THE SENATE
Twenty-Third Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature
P. O. Box 500129
Saipan, MP 96950

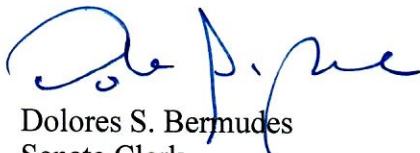
December 20, 2024

The Honorable Arnold I. Palacios
Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Governor Palacios:

I have the honor of transmitting herewith for your action **Senate Bill No. 23-67, SS1** entitled, "To allow the Health Care Professions Licensing Board to promulgate regulations for the licensing of physicians licensed to practice in a foreign country; and for other purposes," which was passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Twenty-Third Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Sincerely,



Dolores S. Bermudes
Senate Clerk

Attachment





THE SENATE
TWENTY-THIRD NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

SENATE BILL NO. 23-67, SS1

AN ACT

To allow the Health Care Professions Licensing Board to promulgate regulations for the licensing of physicians licensed to practice in a foreign country; and for other purposes.

SENATE ACTION

Offered by Senator(s): Donald M. Manglona

Date: August 08, 2024

Referred to: Committee on Health, Education and Welfare

Standing Committee Report No.: 23-120 Adopted on 11/19/24

Final Reading: November 19, 2024

HOUSE ACTION

Referred to: None

Standing Committee Report No.: None

First and Final Reading: December 18, 2024

A blue ink signature of Senator Celina R. Babauta, written in a cursive style.

Senator Celina R. Babauta
SENATE LEGISLATIVE SECRETARY



THE SENATE
TWENTY-THIRD NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE
FOURTH REGULAR SESSION, 2024 **S.B. NO. 23-67, SS1**

AN ACT

To allow the Health Care Professions Licensing Board to promulgate regulations for the licensing of physicians licensed to practice in a foreign country; and for other purposes.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE TWENTY-THIRD NORTHERN MARIANAS
COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:**

- 1 **Section 1. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature finds that health care for the
2 residents of the Commonwealth Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) is dependent on the ability
3 of medical facilities to recruit and maintain qualified health care providers. Due to economic
4 and other conditions, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC), the major health
5 care facility in the CNMI, is finding it increasingly difficult to attract qualified and competent
6 physicians to provide services to the people of the Marianas, especially in the specialized
7 areas of Oncology, Radiology, Hemodialysis, Emergency Medicine, and Primary Care (Rota
8 & Tinian Health Centers). This has resulted in diminished health care resources for all the
9 residents of the CNMI, especially for the islands of Tinian and Rota (Primary Care
10 Physicians).
- 11 The Legislature further finds that insurers and other third-party payors, either through
12 independent travel or through the Health Network (formerly Medical Referral) Program, will
13 cover services for CNMI residents performed in select foreign countries for procedures not
14 currently available at CHCC. In most cases, providers in these countries are not licensed in the
15 CNMI nor in the United States, but are still qualified to treat and care for patients who reside
16 in the CNMI that are being treated in the providers' respective home country.

SENATE BILL NO. 23-67, SS1

1 The Legislature is cognizant that 3 CMC § 2214 authorizes the limited practice of
2 physicians licensed to practice in a foreign country. However, the corresponding statutory
3 provisions (3 CMC §§ 2241-46) and regulation (NMIAC § 185-10-4207) established by
4 Public Law 17-56 for the licensing of foreign and international medical graduates without
5 U.S. training or a U.S. license were too impractical and extensive that it has been impossible
6 to hire any physician licensed to practice in a foreign country. Therefore, the said statutory
7 provisions and the regulation must be repealed so that the Health Care Professions Licensing
8 Board (HCPLB) can properly adopt the appropriate regulations necessary for the licensing of
9 foreign physicians without a U.S. training or a U.S. license.

10 Accordingly, the purpose of this legislation is to repeal the statutory provisions (3
11 CMC §§ 2241-46) and regulation (NMIAC § 185-10-4207) established by Public Law 17-56
12 to allow the HCPLB to promulgate regulations for the licensing of physicians licensed to
13 practice in a foreign country. The foregoing repealers and amendment to 3 CMC § 2214
14 would provide a pathway for the recruitment of exceptionally gifted foreign licensed
15 physicians at the CHCC and private clinics to enhance health care services in the CNMI.

16 **Section 2. Repealer.** 3 CMC §§ 2241-46 are hereby repealed in their entirety.

17 **Section 3. Repealer.** NMIAC § 185-10-4207 is hereby repealed in its entirety.

18 **Section 4. Amendment.** 3 CMC § 2214 is hereby amended to read as follows:

19 **“§ 2214. Limited Practice for Physicians Licensed to Practice in a Foreign**
20 **Country.**

21 (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, a physician licensed to
22 practice in a foreign country ~~other than Canada~~ may be granted a license to practice subject to
23 the requirements and conditions provided in regulations of the Board ~~which have been~~
24 ~~approved as to form and substance by the Attorney General.~~

25 (b) The Board shall provide by regulation for the practice of a regulated physician in
26 the Commonwealth by a professional licensed to practice in a foreign country with acceptable
27 education, training, examination results and experience comparable to that of a person who is
28 otherwise qualified for licensure under this chapter. Such regulations shall address with
29 specificity:

SENATE BILL NO. 23-67, SS1

- (1) Professional degree requirements;
- (2) Postgraduate training and continuing medical education requirements;
- (3) Required examinations and certifications;
- (4) Requirements for active and valid licenses;
- (5) Disciplinary history;
- (6) Required professional relationship with a Commonwealth-licensed physician;
- (7) Scope of limited practice in the Commonwealth;
- (8) Limitations on the ability to prescribe controlled substances;
- (9) Insurance and/or other financial requirements;
- (10) Requirements for character and personal conduct;
- (11) Language requirements specific to the practice and population served; and
- (12) Such other requirements the Board considers necessary, appropriate or useful for the effective implementation of this chapter and/or necessary for the protection of those who utilize the professional medical services of those granted a limited license pursuant to this section.”

Section 5. Regulations. The Health Care Professions Licensing Board shall adopt regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

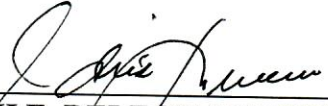
Section 6. Severability. If any provision of this Act or the application of any such provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its provisions to persons or circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

Section 7. Savings Clause. This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior law. The enactment of the Act shall not have the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying, any liability, civil or criminal, which shall already be in existence on the date this Act becomes effective.

SENATE BILL NO. 23-67, SS1

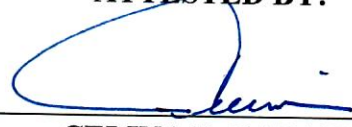
1 **Section 8. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the
2 Governor or becoming law without such approval.

CERTIFIED BY:



EDITH E. DELEON GUERRERO
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ATTESTED BY:



CELINA R. BABAUTA
SENATE LEGISLATIVE SECRETARY

Approved this 10th day of January, 2024^g



ARNOLD I. PALACIOS
Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands