During the 2020 Legislative Session, the West Virginia Legislature promoted the sustainability goal of good health and well-being through passage of HB 4179, Recognition of Emergency Medical Services Personnel Licensure Interstate Compact (REPLICA), which will become effective on May 17, 2020. REPLICA does not provide EMS licensure reciprocity, but rather, REPLICA extends the privilege for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel from member states to practice in remote states on a short-term, intermittent basis under certain approved circumstances. Examples include: (1) response areas for EMS personnel that cross state lines, (2) staffing for large scale responses to support federal agencies for homeland security or wildland firefighting teams, without a disaster declaration, and (3) staffing for large scale concerts, sporting, or other events. Given current concerns about the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak and access to patient care, measures to protect public health, like REPLICA, become more relevant.

REPLICA requires EMS personnel have the ability to share a common standard for initial licensure in member states, and provides states access to all related licensure history for those EMS personnel crossing state borders through a national coordinated database. This is particularly relevant in West Virginia, where the
closest hospital may be in a bordering state, and EMS personnel cross state lines regularly for patient care.

West Virginia will join Colorado, Texas, Virginia, Idaho, Kansas, Tennessee, Utah, Wyoming, Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama, Delaware, Nebraska, South Carolina, Missouri, and New Hampshire as compact states. Since some states bordering West Virginia are not yet compact members, West Virginia law will retain the language of West Virginia §16-4C-8a. Courtesy certification of emergency medical services personnel in surrounding states. Once all bordering states join the compact, this language will no longer be necessary.

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