

# **SB 145 - Written Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ari Plaut

Position: FAV

February 7, 2023

The Honorable Chairwoman Melony Griffith  
The Senate Finance Committee

**RE: SB 145 – State Board of Social Work Examiners – Temporary License to Practice Social Work  
Position: SUPPORT**

Dear Madam Chair Griffith, Madam Vice-Chair Klausmeier, and esteemed Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

On behalf of Pressley Ridge, I urge a favorable report on the above legislation. Pressley Ridge is a private non-profit organization that provides foster care support to families and youth in Maryland. We applaud Senator Chris West for sponsoring this legislation.

The purpose of this written testimony is to focus on other states' temporary licensing process, as well as explain how current licensing boards in Maryland issue temporary licenses.

#### **I. Other States**

There are currently 24 states that allow temporary licensure for social workers. Here are some examples that are analogous to HB 103/SB 145:

Indiana<sup>1</sup> - Allows temporary permits for up to 12 months, or until you pass the test. Indiana allows a temporary license to practice prior to passing a licensing exam.

Wisconsin<sup>2</sup> - In the statute, it states that "The social worker section may issue a temporary certificate permitting the use of the title "social worker" to an individual who pays the fee and who meets all the qualifications for the social worker certificate except for passing the required examinations."

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<sup>1</sup> [Social Work Licensing in Indiana - National Association Of Social Workers Indiana Chapter \(naswin.org\)](https://www.naswin.org/indiana)

<sup>2</sup> [https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin\\_code/mpsw/3](https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/mpsw/3)

West Virginia<sup>3</sup> - This is a temporary license for applicants who have never taken the state social work exam, but hold a certain accredited degree in social work (BSW or MSW) - OR - are enrolled in their final semester prior to graduation leading to their degree in social work.

Texas – See attached application for temporary license. Included on the application is language that states that the temporary license is “valid until the licensee attempts the appropriate examination, or at the end of the six-month issuance of the temporary license.”

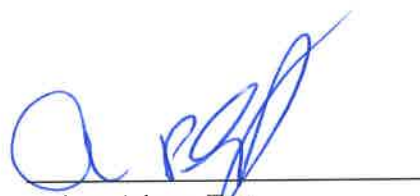
Connecticut<sup>4</sup> - The Department may issue a temporary permit to an applicant for licensure as a master's level social worker who holds a master's degree from an accredited social work educational program but who has not yet taken the licensure examination.

## II. Other Boards in Maryland

In addition to the above states that allow for temporary licenses to practice social work, Maryland already allows several other professionals to practice their respective occupations with a temporary license. For example, Maryland Department of Health Board of Occupational Therapy<sup>5</sup>, and the Maryland Board of Nursing<sup>6</sup>.

As you can see above, this passing SB 145 is not precedent setting because it is already commonplace to issue temporary licenses in Maryland, and temporary social work licenses across the U.S.

Thank you for your time and we encourage the Committee to support a favorable report on SB145.



Ari M. Plaut, Esq.  
Boston Plaut Law Offices  
On Behalf of Pressley Ridge

<sup>3</sup> [West Virginia Board of Social Work > Licensure > License Types > Temporary Permit \(wvsocialworkboard.org\)](http://wvsocialworkboard.org)

<sup>4</sup> <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Practitioner-Licensing--Investigations/Masters-Level-Social-Worker/Temporary-Permit#:~:text=The%20Department%20may%20issue%20a,yet%20taken%20the%20licensure%20examination.>

<sup>5</sup> [https://health.maryland.gov/botp/Pages/temporary\\_application.aspx](https://health.maryland.gov/botp/Pages/temporary_application.aspx)

<sup>6</sup> <https://mbon.maryland.gov/Pages/licensure-by-endorsement.aspx>

**TEXAS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH EXECUTIVE COUNCIL  
TEXAS STATE BOARD OF SOCIAL WORKER EXAMINERS**



**Application for Social Worker Temporary License**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ SSN: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Work Degree (BSW or MSW): \_\_\_\_\_ Conferral Date: \_\_\_\_\_

University Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**By submitting this application, I affirm that I have read and understand Chapter 781 of the Texas Administrative Code (the Board's Rules). I further understand that:**

- A person holding a temporary license must take the designated examination within six months of issuance of the temporary license.
- The temporary license is valid until the licensee attempts the appropriate examination or the end of the six-month issuance of the temporary license.
- A person holding a temporary license must display the license at the licensee's place of business and must use the appropriate licensed title or initials followed by the word "Temporary" in all professional use of the licensee's name.
- Should the applicant take and fail the examination, the temporary license is no longer valid. The applicant must immediately cease and desist from using the temporary license and title, and return the license certificate to the Council.
- Should the applicant pass the examination, the Council will issue the license or specialty recognition. A temporary license holder who has passed the licensing examination continues to be temporarily licensed until the Council issues a regular license or the temporary license expires.
- A person who failed the examination and is without a valid temporary license may retake the examination under §781.412 of this title (relating to Examination Requirement).
- A temporary license will not be granted to an applicant who has held a temporary license for the same license category previously within his/her lifetime.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Required Documentation:**

- Complete, Signed Application
- Application Fee (check, money order). See 22 TAC 885.1 for a list of the fee amounts.
- Proof of exam registration from ASWB
- Proof of completion of Texas Jurisprudence Exam for Social Workers
- Official transcript showing conferral of degree-must be sent directly to the board from your university (via regular mail or via email to [transcripts@bhec.texas.gov](mailto:transcripts@bhec.texas.gov))
- Self-query report from NPDB (must be received in sealed envelope from NPDB or by secure .pdf) <https://www.npdb.hrsa.gov>

# **HB 103 Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Chloe Perez

Position: FAV

January 23, 2023

House Bill 103

State Board of Social Work Examiners - Temporary License to Practice Social Work

House Health and Government Operations

Position: FAVORABLE

I am Chloe Bernardi, President/CEO of Hearts and Homes for Youth and public policy co-chair of The Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth (MARFY) which is an association of private child caring organizations providing foster care, group homes, and other services through more than 200 programs across Maryland. The members of MARFY represent providers who serve Maryland's children who are most vulnerable and are in out of home placements due to abuse, neglect or severe mental health, and medical needs. Hearts and Homes for Youth provides residential homes, treatment foster care, and independent living programs for pregnant and parenting teen moms throughout Maryland and have served over 41,000 young people since 1964. I have been in the field since 1997 and am an LCSW-C Supervisor.

There was a shortage of social workers entering child welfare prior to the pandemic and the work force crisis has been magnified by COVID 19 and has a detrimental impact on Maryland's families and our community. Without being able to fill our social worker positions and in a timely manner, we are unable to accept youth into our programs to capacity which means young people who don't have placement are living in hotels or in DSS offices. This bill offers a tool, should it be needed, to provide temporary licenses to social workers waiting to take their exam.

This bill provides an avenue for graduates who have completed their master's level social work educational requirements and internships to begin working while they wait for a test date, if one is not readily available. They are supervised by LCSW-C, covered under an agency's liability insurance and are still required to take the exam. The option to utilize this resource does not compromise safety or the integrity of being a social worker and other professions in health care have similar structures.



Hearts & Homes for Youth, Inc.  
3919 National Drive, Suite 400  
Burtonsville, MD, 20866  
301-589-8444

We are in a workforce crisis and need to eliminate barriers to filling our vacant social work positions so that we can adequately serve the youth and families in the child welfare system. It is for these reasons; I politely ask for a FAVORABLE report on House Bill 103. Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chloe Bernardi".

Chloe Bernardi, LCSW-C, LICSW

President/CEO

For more information call or email: Therese M. Hessler | 301-503-2576 |  
therese@ashlargr.com

**SB0145\_FAV\_MdCSWC\_State Board of Social Work Exami**

Uploaded by: Christine Krone

Position: FAV





## The Maryland Clinical Social Work Coalition

The Mdcswc, sponsored by the Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work, represents the interests of more than 9,300 licensed clinical social workers in Maryland.

TO: The Honorable Melony Griffith, Chair  
Members, Senate Finance Committee  
The Honorable Chris West

FROM: Judith Gallant, LCSW-C, Chair, Maryland Clinical Social Work Coalition

DATE: February 7, 2023

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 145 – *State Board of Social Work Examiners – Temporary License to Practice Social Work*

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The Maryland Clinical Social Work Coalition (Mdcswc), sponsored by the Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work, represents the interests of more than 9,300 licensed clinical social workers in Maryland. On behalf of Mdcswc, we **support** Senate Bill 145.

Senate Bill 145 authorizes the State Board of Social Work Examiners to issue a temporary license to an applicant who, except for passing the required examination, has otherwise completed the appropriate education and experience required for a license to practice bachelor social work or master social work. A temporary license authorizes the holder to practice in the State ***only under the supervision*** of a board-approved supervisor while the temporary license is effective.

The COVID-19 pandemic created significant delays in testing for licensure exams, posing a significant obstacle for employers, and graduates waiting to enter the workforce. This bill will provide greater flexibility during a time when we are seeing higher demands for mental and behavioral health care services and a much-needed workforce to provide those services. Mdcswc urges a favorable report.

**For more information call:**

Christine K. Krone  
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer  
Danna L. Kauffman  
410-244-7000

Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work: [www.gwscsw.org](http://www.gwscsw.org)

**Contacts:** Coalition Chair: Judy Gallant, LCSW-C; email: [jg708@columbia.edu](mailto:jg708@columbia.edu); mobile (301) 717-1004  
Legislative Consultants: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer and Christine Krone, Schwartz, Metz, Wise & Kauffman, PA,  
20 West Street, Annapolis, MD 21401

Email: [pmetz@smwpa.com](mailto:pmetz@smwpa.com); mobile (410) 746-9003 ; [ckrone@smwpa.com](mailto:ckrone@smwpa.com); mobile (410) 940-9165

# **SB145 West FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Christopher West

Position: FAV

**CHRIS WEST**  
*Legislative District 42*  
Baltimore and Carroll Counties

Judicial Proceedings Committee



**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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James Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Room 322  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3648 • 301-858-3648  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3648  
Chris.West@senate.state.md.us

*District Office*  
1134 York Road, Suite 200  
Lutherville-Timonium, MD 21093  
410-823-7087

February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023

The Senate Finance Committee  
The Honorable Melony Griffith  
3 East Miller Senate Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: Senate Bill – 145 - State Board of Social Work Examiners - Temporary License to Practice Social Work**

Dear Chairwoman Griffith, and members of the Committee,

Senate Bill 145 is a reintroduction of Senate Bill 167, which passed both chambers during the 2021 Session but in slightly different form. Time ran out before the differences between the bills could be worked out. This updated version reflects the House amendments of SB167 as it was passed.

There is a massive shortage of social workers in the United States amounting to more than 10,000 social workers trained in mental health issues and substance use disorders. This shortage is projected to persist until at least 2025. This problem is being exacerbated in Maryland by long delays in administering the social worker exam. Right now, our schools are graduating many social workers but they then have to wait for weeks or months to take the social worker exam.

Senate Bill 145 requires the State Board of Social Work Examiners to issue temporary licenses to practice for applicants who, except for passing an examination, have met all other education and experience requirements to be licensed as social workers. This bill requires the Board to issue a temporary license if the examination is unavailable to an applicant for at least seven (7) days. Further, the license would be valid until 180 days after the examination becomes readily available.

Under Senate Bill 145, the Board maintains authority to restrict or regulate the temporarily licensed social worker(s) however it sees fit, and it explicitly provides that a social worker holding a temporary license is only authorized to practice social work under the supervision of a board-approved supervisor.

I appreciate the Committee's consideration of Senate Bill 145 and will be happy to answer any questions the Committee may have.

**SB145\_SWTempLicense\_KennedyKriegerSupport.pdf**

Uploaded by: Emily Arneson

Position: FAV



**DATE:** February 7, 2023      **COMMITTEE:** Senate Finance Committee  
**BILL NO:** Senate Bill 145  
**BILL TITLE:** State Board of Social Work Examiners - Temporary License to Practice Social Work  
**POSITION:** Support

**Kennedy Krieger Institute supports Senate Bill 145 - State Board of Social Work Examiners - Temporary License to Practice Social Work.**

**Bill Summary:**

Senate Bill 145 requires the State Board of Social Work Examiners to issue a temporary license to practice social work to an applicant who has met the education and experience requirements. A temporary licensee will only be able to practice while under the supervision of a board-approved supervisor while the license is effective. The temporary license is only available for 180 days after the examination becomes readily available to the applicant.

**Background:**

Kennedy Krieger Institute is dedicated to improving the lives of children and young adults with developmental, behavioral, cognitive, and physical challenges. Kennedy Krieger's services include inpatient, outpatient, school-based, and community-based programs. Over 27,000 individuals receive services annually at Kennedy Krieger. We employ more than 2,600 persons who play a vital role in our mission to transform the lives of children with disorders of the brain.

At Kennedy Krieger, clinical social workers are part of an interdisciplinary teams of professionals. Through their work, they enable individuals and their families to utilize their natural strengths to manage the ongoing realities and stresses of disability and other emotional or medical conditions that affect individual, family and community functioning and relationships. The social work department provides the following clinical services, as determined by individual and family needs, through any one of the department's inpatient or outpatient programs at Kennedy Krieger.

- Clinical evaluation of individual and family functioning
- Development of an individualized treatment plan
- Individual, family, couple, play and group therapy and counseling
- Educational, support and stress management groups
- Case management

**Rationale:**

Before the pandemic, there was a global shortage in the healthcare workforce<sup>1</sup>. Predictions forecast that employment demands in healthcare will grow faster this decade compared to all other occupations. This includes an increased need for social workers, with demand expected to increase 13% through 2029.<sup>2</sup>

Social workers are an essential part of the care team. But, due to ongoing shortages, there is a lack of available individuals to serve in these positions. By granting temporary licenses, the State can expedite the process of getting educated individuals into the workforce while they work on passing the examination.

**Kennedy Krieger Institute requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 145.**

Emily Arneson – AVP Government Affairs – [arneson@kennedykrieger.org](mailto:arneson@kennedykrieger.org) or 443-631-2188  
707 North Broadway Baltimore, Maryland 21205 (443) 923-9200/Telephone (443)923-9125/Facsimile

<sup>1</sup> Figueroa CA, Harrison R, Chauhan A, Meyer L. Priorities and challenges for health leadership and workforce management globally: a rapid review. *BMC Health Services Research*. 2019;19(1)doi:10.1186/s12913-019-4080-7

<sup>2</sup> Source: [www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/social-workers.htm#tab-1](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/social-workers.htm#tab-1)

# **SB 145- State Board of Social Work Examiners - Tem**

Uploaded by: Jane Krienke

Position: FAV



Maryland  
Hospital Association

February 7, 2023

To: The Honorable Melony Griffith, Chair, Senate Finance Committee

Re: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 145 - State Board of Social Work Examiners - Temporary License to Practice Social Work

Dear Chair Griffith:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 60 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of Senate Bill 145.

Maryland hospitals are facing the most critical staffing shortage in recent memory. MHA's [2022 State of Maryland's Health Care Workforce report](#) outlines a roadmap to ensure Maryland has the health care workforce it needs now and into the future.

Hospitals employ social workers to support behavioral health patients and other vulnerable populations through case management, care coordination, and much more. Patients who face barriers transitioning out of the hospital to the next level of care, home or somewhere else, often rely on social workers to support them during this process. Pediatric patients experiencing hospital overstay also rely on social workers to advocate for resources and support.

SB 145 would allow the State Board of Social Work Examiners to issue temporary licenses to individuals who qualify for licensure except for passing the required examination. There are safeguards in place to limit the scope of these temporary licenses to individuals who are unable to access the licensing examination within seven days and who meet all other requirements. Additionally, the bill limits the length of a temporary license to 180 days after the examination becomes available to the applicant.

Reducing the time from graduation to practice for qualified social workers, with appropriate supervision, would support Maryland's health workforce and provide essential support to patients in need.

For these reasons, we would request a *favorable* report on SB 145.

For more information, please contact:  
Jane Krienke, Senior Legislative Analyst

# **SB 145- Board of Social Work Examiners- Temporary**

Uploaded by: Nicole Smith

Position: FAV





February 7, 2023

The Honorable Chairwoman Melony Griffith  
The Senate Finance Committee

**RE: SB 145- State Board of Social Work Examiners- Temporary License to Practice Social Work  
Position: SUPPORT**

Dear Madam Chair Griffith, Madam Vice-Chair Klausmeier, and esteemed Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to express support for SB145. I am submitting this testimony as a licensed social worker on behalf of the Board of Child Care (BCC). My intention is to share how the current licensing regulations have negatively impacted on our ability to deliver critical services to Maryland's most vulnerable families.

Board of Child Care is an independent, non-profit that provides youth and families with a broad continuum of treatment programs, including education, foster care, behavioral health, and therapeutic residential services. Last year BCC Served over 1300 families throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. Operating programs across state lines gives BCC a unique perspective of best practice in each area. BCC has programs in West Virginia where they have already adopted a temporary license to practice social work. Like the amendments proposed in SB 145, qualified individuals can practice under the supervision of an approved clinical supervisor while they are pending licensure. This evolution has allowed for the safe provision of critical services during the COVID-19 pandemic and the national workforce crisis.

Board of Child Care depends on the skill of qualified licensed social workers to meet both regulatory requirements and our treatment paradigm. Over the past three years, BCC has been challenged to employ licensed social workers at the Masters level (LMSW) and Advanced level (LCSW and LCSW-C), both critical to the operations of our programs. As a result, BCC has reduced capacity by nearly 50% in some of our programs. The reduction in treatment options places further strain on an already taxed system. This results in Maryland's youth having their treatment needs met in out of state programs or languishing in emergency rooms or other environments that are not designed to meet their medical conditions.

Several of my team members have experienced challenges in completing the licensing process after graduating with a MSW degree and/or meeting the requirements of advanced licensure.

Reasons have varied by the individual, but some experienced delays with accessing the exam early in the pandemic and continue to have challenges with pursuing advance licensure to practice; others have not been able to pass the test once given access.

In this current national workforce crisis, it is important to have tools available to be responsive when needs are presented. SB 145 allows for the use of a temporary license in the event there is an unforeseen delay in access to testing for candidates that are otherwise qualified to perform the scope of the respective social work credential under the supervision of a certified social work supervisor.

It is for these reasons that I respectfully ask for a favorable report on Senate Bill 145. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Nicole Smith, LMSW  
Executive Director

**SB0145\_CC\_Buchdahl\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Regan Vaughan

Position: FAV



**Senate Bill 145**  
**State Board of Social Work Examiners-**  
**Temporary License to Practice Social Work**  
Senate Finance Committee  
February 7, 2023

**FAVORABLE**

Catholic Charities of Baltimore supports Bill 173, which would authorize the State Board of Social Work Examiners to issue a temporary license to an applicant, who, except for passing the required examination, has otherwise completed the appropriate education and experience required for a license to practice bachelor social work or master social work. The Board may issue a temporary license if a required examination is unavailable to an applicant for a period of at least seven days. A temporary license is valid until 90 days after the examination becomes readily available to the applicant. A temporary license authorizes the holder to practice social work in the State only under the supervision of a board-approved supervisor while the temporary license is effective.

Inspired by the Gospel to love, serve and teach, Catholic Charities provides care and services to improve the lives of Marylanders in need. For 100 years, Catholic Charities has accompanied Marylanders as they age with dignity, obtain empowering careers, heal from trauma and addiction, achieve economic independence, prepare for educational success and feel welcome as immigrant neighbors. We recognize the need for a sufficient social work workforce to meet the behavioral health needs of Marylanders.

Private providers such as us have experienced a significant and unprecedented workforce crisis. The obstacles to hire social workers due to a national shortage were significant prior to COVID-19. This challenge became even more compounded as a result of the pandemic. The delay in a graduate's ability to sit for the exam to obtain their licensure considerably impedes employer's capacity to offer employment subsequently hindering clinical services to our youth, families and communities. It also ensures social work graduates can begin work as soon as possible after graduation.

**For the reasons listed above, Catholic Charities of Baltimore appreciates your consideration, and urges the committee to issue a favorable report for House Bill Number 173.**

Respectfully Submitted By: Ezra Buchdahl, LCSW-C, Administrator, Family Services Division

**Pressley Ridge\_SB145\_Written Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Simone Bramble

Position: FAV

February 6, 2023

The Honorable Chairwoman Melony Griffith  
The Senate Finance Committee

RE: SB 145 – State Board of Social Work Examiners – Temporary License to Practice Social Work

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Madam Chair Griffith, Madam Vice-Chair Klausmeier, and esteemed Members of the Senate Finance Committee, I am writing to express support for SB 145.

Pressley Ridge serves some of the state's most vulnerable youth and young adults. Each year nearly 8,000 children and families are strengthened primarily through services provided in their homes and community and, if needed, in an out-of-home setting. Pressley Ridge provides individuals and families with hope and support through life's challenges. We pride ourselves on partnering with families and meeting them where they are, when they need it most.

Since 1988, Pressley Ridge has been a leader in foster care and community-based mental health services in Maryland. In recent years, we have also added supportive services for transition-age youth, including workforce development and independent living programs.

Our mission to do whatever it takes to create success for children and families requires that we be in a state of constant readiness, with the workforce to do so. We employ licensed social workers to provide critical case management, behavioral health, and therapeutic services to meet the needs of children, youth, and families. The current delays at the Board of Social Work Examiners to process applications for licensure severely limits our ability and capacity to meet those needs. Private providers like Pressley Ridge are bound by a set of regulations that limits the number of children and youth a social worker can serve in our Treatment Foster Care and Independent Living programs, thereby hampering our efforts to support the state in placing youth in these programs. In the last year we have capped admissions to our programs due to the shortage of licensed social workers. Other like providers across the state have had to do the same, resulting in fewer home settings for youth.

This bill will allow providers the opportunity to hire an applicant who has completed his or her required academic work, field education experience, passed the requisite background clearance and are simply waiting to take the licensing exam. Once hired, the employee will work under the supervision of a Licensed Certified Social Worker – Clinical (LCSW-C). This bill can be a tool for the Board of Social Work Examiners to eliminate delays and bottlenecks in the licensing process.

We at Pressley Ridge encourage a favorable report on SB 145. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Simone Bramble, LCSW-C, LICSW  
Executive Director

For more information call or email: Frank Boston or Ari Plaut at 410-323-7090 or  
fdblaw@gmail.com

# **HB103Testimony2.pdf**

Uploaded by: Steven Acerno

Position: FAV



January 16, 2023

House Bill 103

State Board of Social Work Examiners - Temporary License to Practice Social Work

House Health and Government Operations

Position: FAVORABLE

I am Steven Acerno, Director of the Treatment Foster Care program at The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region and current chair of The Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth (MARFY). MARFY is an association of private child caring organizations providing foster care, group homes, and other services through more than 200 programs across Maryland. The members of MARFY represent providers who serve Maryland's most vulnerable children who are in the foster care system due to abuse, neglect, severe mental health issues, and complex medical needs. The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region's Treatment Foster care Program serves youth with emotional/behavioral issues, medically fragile youth as well as teen mothers.

The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region foster care program employs licensed social workers to provide case management and clinical services to these children and their families. Currently, there is a shortage of licensed social workers throughout the state of Maryland. This shortage directly and drastically impacts the number of children and families which the provider community is capable of serving. Private programs in the state have regulatory limits on the caseload size of social workers. The inability to fill positions results in fewer youth receiving care. In this time when we have a shortage of placement options for children in foster care, we need practical and immediate solutions to ensure that qualified individuals are available to enter the workforce.

Individuals who enter the social work field enter it because they have a passion to help those in need, for social justice, and to advocate for those who do not have a voice. The state of Maryland is experiencing a workforce crisis related to social workers entering the field, and it is imperative that we make it possible for these individuals to do the good work they are trained for as soon as possible. While we understand the necessity of maintaining high standards in the social work field and the

role which licensure plays in that, there needs to be a tool to bridge the gap when unforeseen delays prevent test accessibility. House Bill 103 would be critical in providing this tool by putting a system in place so that in the event the social work licensing exam is not available, candidates who are otherwise qualified to perform social work duties could do so under a certified supervisor.

The provider community is committed to a multi-disciplinary approach to alleviating this workforce crisis. The passage of this bill will help to remove the first barrier to our ability to meet this exponentially growing need. It is for these reasons that I respectfully ask for a FAVORABLE report on House Bill 103. Thank you.

For more information call or email: Therese M. Hessler | 301-503-2576 | [therese@ashlargr.com](mailto:therese@ashlargr.com)

**SB145\_MARFY\_SUPPORT.pdf**

Uploaded by: Therese Hessler

Position: FAV



**February 7, 2023**

**Senate Bill 145  
State Board of Social Work Examiners – Temporary License to Practice Social Work  
Senate Finance Committee**

**Position: SUPPORT**

The Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth (MARFY) is an association of private child caring organizations providing foster care, group homes, and other services through more than 200 programs across Maryland. The members of MARFY represent providers who serve Maryland's most vulnerable children who are in out of home placements due to abuse, neglect or severe mental health, and medical needs. We operate group homes, treatment foster care programs and independent living programs, primarily serving the foster care population as well as a juvenile services population.

If passed, Senate Bill 145 would authorize the State Board of Social Work Examiners to issue a temporary license to an applicant who, except for passing the required examination, has otherwise completed the appropriate education and experience required for a license to practice bachelor social work or master social work. The board may issue a temporary license if a required examination is unavailable to an applicant for a period of at least seven days. A temporary license is valid until 180 days after the examination becomes readily available to the applicant. A temporary license authorizes the holder to practice bachelor social work or master social work in the State only under the supervision of a board-approved supervisor while the temporary license is effective.

Private providers experienced significant obstacles prior to COVID-19 as it pertained to hiring social workers due to an identified national shortage; and this challenge has become more compounded as a result of the pandemic in combination with other unforeseen events such as malware attacks on State websites and administrative delays in processing applications. The delay in a graduate's ability to sit for their exam to obtain their licensure considerably impedes employer's capacity to offer employment subsequently hindering clinical services that our youth, families, and communities require. Due to the current unprecedented hindrances, it took many agencies over 10 months to fill social worker positions in some group homes over the past two-years.

As worker challenges continue, the state of our current mental health needs as it pertains to caring for our most vulnerable populations far exceeds anything MARFY members have ever witnessed. We strongly advocate for modifications to current practices be considered to align with our existing barriers for the mental well-being and safety of our youth, families, and communities. Allowing this bill to pass would provide an opportunity to amend the current statutes to meet the rising needs of our community.

**It is for these reasons we politely ask for a favorable report on Senate Bill 145.**

**For more information call or email:**

Therese M. Hessler | 301-503-2576 | [therese@ashlargr.com](mailto:therese@ashlargr.com)

1500 Union Avenue, Suite 2500, Baltimore, MD 21211  
410-727-6367 | [www.marylandnonprofits.org](http://www.marylandnonprofits.org)

# **SB145\_SUPPORT\_Adoptions Together.pdf**

Uploaded by: Therese Hessler

Position: FAV



February 7, 2023

Senate Bill 145

State Board of Social Work Examiners – Temporary License to Practice Social Work

Senate Finance Committee

**Position: SUPPORT**

Adoptions Together, a Maryland Licensed Child Placement agency is a 501c3 nonprofit that creates safety and security for youth and families throughout our state supports this bill. Each year our education, training, counseling, family finding, and child placement programs impact the lives of approximately 2500 Maryland residents. We employ a diverse staff of 35 full-time professionals including licensed social workers, contract with 25 licensed social workers, and serve as a field placement site for up to 7 social work students per year. We have been operating in the State of Maryland since 1990.

As a professional social worker, I believe licensing is critical to ensure a consistent standard of practice. The criteria and ability to obtain a license should be clear, accessible, and consistent. Unfortunately, due to many factors, the process towards obtaining a license is laden with barriers and hiring social workers is the most difficult we have experienced in 32 years of practice.

**This testimony requests that you support Senate Bill 145, a bill that would make the path to licensure more consistent with the capacity of the licensing body to provide the necessary oversight. This bill would authorize the State Board of Social Work Examiners to issue a temporary license to an applicant who, except for passing the required examination, has otherwise completed the appropriate education and experience required for a license to practice bachelor social work or master social work. The board may issue a temporary license if a required examination is unavailable to an applicant for a period of at least seven days. A temporary license is valid until 90 days after the examination becomes readily available to the applicant. A temporary license authorizes the holder to practice bachelor social work or master social work in the State only under the supervision of a board approved supervisor while the temporary license is effective.**

Private providers experienced significant obstacles prior to COVID-19 as it pertained to hiring social workers due to an identified national shortage; and this challenge has become more compounded as a result of the pandemic. **The delay in a graduate's ability to sit for their exam to obtain their licensure considerably impedes employer's capacity to offer employment subsequently hindering clinical services that our youth, families, and communities require.**

Post pandemic, social workers are in short supply and are desperately needed. Pandemic-related stress has affected everyone, including individuals in the helping professions such as our staff. Designated as essential workers, social workers have continued reporting to work. The COVID crisis has exacerbated burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary trauma, all things that affect social workers even in non-pandemic times. **We ask that you please support Senate Bill 145 to create more capacity for social workers to practice until the licensing exam can be given in a timely way.** Thank you.

Janice Goldwater, LCSW-C CEO Adoptions Together

For more information call or email: [Jgoldwater@adoptionstogether.org](mailto:Jgoldwater@adoptionstogether.org) 301 422-5125

**SB145\_SUPPORT\_ARROW.pdf**

Uploaded by: Therese Hessler

Position: FAV

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**February 7, 2023**

**Senate Bill 145  
State Board of Social Work Examiners - Temporary License to Practice Social Work  
Senate Finance Committee**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

I am Robert Basler, Associate Vice President of Arrow Child and Family ministries and public policy co-chair of The Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth (MARFY) is an association of private child caring organizations providing foster care, group homes, and other services through more than 200 programs across Maryland. The members of MARFY represent providers who serve Maryland's most vulnerable children who are in out of home placements due to abuse, neglect or severe mental health, and medical needs. Arrow provides residential, treatment foster care, special education and community behavioral health services to youth and families who live throughout Maryland.

Our program uses licensed social workers to provide case management and clinical services in all of our programs. There is a current shortage of licensed social workers throughout our State. It is not uncommon for Arrow to have social work positions go unfilled for months. This experience is shared by MARFY members. This shortage has significant negative effects on providers and the youth and families they serve.

The primary impact is the reduction in the number of clients served. Our programs have regulatory and best practice limits on the caseload size of social workers. The inability to fill positions results in fewer youth receiving services. In a time when we have a crisis in placement options for foster youth and a growing youth mental health crisis, we need common sense solutions to ensure that qualified social workers are available to work.

Senate Bill 145 would remove one barrier to social workers being able to work. In the event of barriers to timely access to social work licensing exams, candidates who are otherwise qualified to perform social work duties could do so under a certified supervisor. Other professions have similar structures, and it works. There is some risk of candidates not passing the exam and no longer being able to work as a social worker, but given pass rates for the test, this is a limited risk.

We are in a social work workforce crisis. This bill helps alleviate one barrier to social workers entering the workforce and helping meet a growing need. It is for these reasons, I politely ask for a FAVORABLE report on House Bill 103. Thank you.

**For more information call or email:**

Therese M. Hessler | 301-503-2576 | [therese@ashlargr.com](mailto:therese@ashlargr.com)



**SB145\_SUPPORT\_Cedar Ridge.pdf**

Uploaded by: Therese Hessler

Position: FAV



## CEDAR RIDGE CHILDREN'S HOME & SCHOOL, INC.

12146 Cedar Ridge Road ♦ Williamsport, MD 21795

Senate Bill 145

State Board of Social Work Examiners-Temporary License to Practice Social Work

Senate Finance Committee

Position: Support

I am the Program Administrator of Cedar Ridge Children's Home and School, Inc., located in Williamsport, Maryland. We are a mental health residential Group Home licensed by the Maryland Department of Health. We have been serving the mental health and behavioral health needs of at risk youth for over 50 years. As part of our state licensure we are required to have licensed Master Level Social Workers (MSW) to deliver the therapy needed by all our youth. Without these licensed providers we cannot attend to the mental health needs of the youth we serve.

If Senate Bill 145 is passed, it would allow us to hire staff who are ready to heal our youth in a much faster time frame. We would not have gaps in service, or overwork the few therapists we have, while waiting on a new hire to take the licensure exam, and begin doing their job. This bill would allow the therapist to deliver the much-needed treatment, by issuance of a Temporary License, to fill the gap until the required examination for licensure can be taken. Currently these exams are offered at times that are not immediately useful to the needs of our youth. It is the needs of the vulnerable youth we serve that is driving our desire for the passage of this bill.

I feel it is critical for the seamless continuation of mental health services we deliver to have Senate Bill 145 passed. It is a tough market right now for the few MSW's that are available. We feel it is very important that when we do hire a MSW, they are able to treat our youth as soon as possible. The passage of this bill will reduce this gap in services from months to a week or two.

In this post Covid pandemic time, we are still suffering from a reduced work force; especially in the mental health field. The quicker we can get these folks licensed and available for serving the mental health needs of the youth in our program, the faster they will be healed and the sooner they can be safely returned to their communities of origin. That is the goal of the mental health serving organizations in this state. We cannot do this efficiently without a quicker process of licensure and implementation of services by MSW's that the passage of Senate Bill 145 will provide.

Thank you

Tom Badley  
Residential Director  
Cedar Ridge Children's Home and School  
12146 Cedar Ridge Rd  
Williamsport, MD 21795  
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**RESIDENTIAL DEPARTMENT**

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# **NASW Maryland - 2023 SB 145 FWA - Temp Licensure -**

Uploaded by: Mary Beth DeMartino

Position: FWA

**Senate Finance Committee  
Senate Bill 145 – State Board of Social Work Examiners –  
Temporary License to Practice Social Work  
SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

**February 7, 2023**

The National Association of Social Workers-Maryland Chapter, an organization representing social workers statewide, is asking for your support for Senate Bill 145 with amendments. With our amendments, this bill will authorize the State Board of Social Work Examiners (BSWE) to issue temporary licenses to applicants who have met all requirements, except for passing an examination, for licensure at the bachelor and master social worker levels. The intent of this bill is that it be used at the sole discretion of the BSWE when the licensing exam is not accessible as was the case in 2020 during the pandemic.

In order to work as a social worker in Maryland one must:

- Earn a master social work (MSW) degree or a bachelor social work (BSW) degree from an accredited school of social work
- Pass a criminal background check; and
- Pass a national exam.

The Maryland Social Work Practice Act and its regulations provide that a student may begin their licensure application and take the licensing exam in the last semester of one's MSW or BSW program so that the license can be conferred as soon as the BSWE has evidence that the required degree was awarded. This process permits students to begin applying for and accepting jobs which are available to them immediately upon graduation. In 2020, the process hit a roadblock when graduating students found that they were unable to schedule exam appointments and therefore were unable to apply for jobs or take jobs which were offered to them.

The employment problem is exacerbated by the fact that our practice act not only prohibits an unlicensed person from using the title of social work but it also prohibits a person with a social work degree from performing any tasks which are within the very wide scope which is defined as the "practice of social work." Therefore, a recent graduate could not accept a position which could be accepted by any number of competitors who did not have to have a license in order to

engage in specified activities. The BSWE has leveled huge fines against people with social work degrees who perform these tasks and are in positions which are not titled as social work positions.

There are a number of other states that have the ability to issue temporary social work licenses, including Connecticut, West Virginia, New York, Texas, Arkansas, Indiana, New Mexico, and Wisconsin. These are all states that use the same national exam used in Maryland and all have temporary or provisional licensure as a permanent part of their licensing laws. Temporary licenses are also supported by our national social work organization.

We are also aware of other Health Occupation boards in Maryland that currently have statute provisions for temporary licensure, including the State Board of Dental Examiners, the State Board of Morticians and Funeral Directors, the State Board of Nursing, the State Board of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators, the State Board of Occupational Therapy Practice, the State Board of Physicians the State Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners. As each practice act is different, the requirements and circumstances for temporary licensure vary greatly across professions and licensing types. This bill most closely matches the statute for Occupational Therapists, which have a temporary licensure category for applicants who have not yet met the examination requirements

Given the unfortunate probability that emergency events will happen in the future, whether related to health or technology, we feel that it is imperative that the BSWE have all of the tools necessary to assure that social work services can be provided to the public regardless of the immediate availability of a national exam which is outside of its control. With the amendments below, it will be up to the BSWE whether or not it chooses to use this particular tool in any given situation.

#### Amendments

On page 2, in line 15 strike beginning with the word "IF" through "DAYS," in line 18.

On page 2, in line 18, strike "SHALL" and replace with MAY.

We ask that the committee to vote favorably on Senate Bill 145 with these amendments.

# **SB 145 SW temp licensure OPD opposition .pdf**

Uploaded by: Melissa Rothstein

Position: UNF



**NATASHA DARTIGUE**  
PUBLIC DEFENDER

**KEITH LOTRIDGE**  
DEPUTY PUBLIC DEFENDER

**MELISSA ROTHSTEIN**  
CHIEF OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

**ELIZABETH HILLIARD**  
ACTING DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

## **POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

**BILL: SB145 - State Board of Social Work Examiners - Temporary License to Practice Social Work**

**FROM: Maryland Office of the Public Defender**

**POSITION: Oppose**

**DATE: 2/6/2023**

The Maryland Office of the Public Defender respectfully requests that the Committee issue an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 145. Our concerns are both philosophical and practical – authorizing the practice of social work before one meets the certification requirements will disproportionately impact our clients and other low income individuals who will potentially receive needed services by individuals who are less qualified, reduce accountability, and weaken the credibility of social workers. Moreover, the administrative process of establishing and issuing temporary licenses will exacerbate the delays that currently exist in the licensure process.

If passed, SB 145 would allow for individuals who have not yet passed the required examination to practice social work under a temporary license. Certification by exam is a common practice for professions that impact individuals' wellbeing and daily lives. Social workers should be held to standards to the same extent that doctors, lawyers, and other helping professions are.

Examinations provide an accountability measure and base standard for competence that is needed prior to practice. The Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) Model Social Practice Act requires, at each licensure level (LBSW, LMSW, LCSW- and LCSW-C), that each applicant successfully pass an Examination or examinations prescribed by the Board. The ASWB has also never endorsed a temporary licensure. Removing the examination requirement, even temporarily, would place Maryland below national standards for its social worker expectations.

Temporary licensure to people who have not yet passed the licensure examination will allow for social work practice by people who are ultimately determined to be unqualified. The pass rate among people seeking their LMSW certification in Maryland is 86.4%, meaning that 13.6% will be able to practice temporarily despite not subsequently meeting the base competency expectations.

Our clients and their communities need and deserve the highest quality social work services. We would not hire someone who only has a temporary license, and we are concerned that community resources that provide services to our clients may rely on temporary social workers who may ultimately be found not sufficiently qualified. With a high number of suicides, mental illness, and overdoses throughout the state and country, this is no time to risk the health and life of citizens by allowing unlicensed MSWs to practice.

Given the import and impact of social workers' efforts, we are also concerned about the additional responsibility it places on the Board Certified Clinical Supervisors, who accept the responsibility and risk associated with providing social work supervision. The purpose of a licensing examination is to identify persons who possess the minimum knowledge and experience necessary to perform tasks on the job safely. Without an examination, this responsibility falls to the supervisor. Board certified clinical supervisors already provide clinical supervision to LMSWs and adding this group would be an additional burden.

Underlying this bill is a systems problem that has resulted in a backlog and delay in licenses being issued. According to the Department of Health's [Health Professional Boards and Commissions' Analysis of FY 2023 Maryland Executive Budget](#), in the past five years, the Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners (MBSWE) failed to meet the requirement to issue 95% of new licenses within 10 days of receipt of the last qualifying document. If the MBSWE is unable to timely process LMSW and LCSW-C licenses, adding another group will further complicate the systems problems. Ultimately, the result will be to extend the delay of full licensure to those who have met the qualification standards.

The most impactful solutions for the issue of access to examinations are an increased number of testing sites, an increased number of available testing time slots, and ensuring that local schools of social work release transcripts in a timely manner. Larger solutions to the overall shortage of social workers include more competitive pay (Maryland's close proximity to



Washington DC creates major pay disparities in social work salaries) and an increase in the number of permanent, merit social worker pins across State Agencies.

All Marylanders in need of treatment services deserve the best possible care that meets basic minimum standards. This includes ensuring that basic standards are met, and accountability measures that assess professional competency remain in place.

**For these reasons, the Maryland Office of the Public Defender urges this Committee to issue an unfavorable report on SB 145.**

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**Submitted by: Government Relations Division of the Maryland Office of the Public Defender.**

**Authored by: Melissa Rothstein, Chief of External Affairs,  
[melissa.rothstein@maryland.gov](mailto:melissa.rothstein@maryland.gov), 410-767-9853.**

**1 - SB 145 - FIN - Bd. of Social Work - LOO.docx.p**

Uploaded by: State of Maryland (MD)

Position: UNF



# Board of Social Work Examiners

*Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Acting Secretary*

*Sondra G. Petty, Chair – Daphne McClellan, Executive Director*

*4201 Patterson Avenue, Suite 318 Baltimore MD 21215 Phone: 410-764-4788*

## 2023 SESSION POSITION PAPER

**BILL NO: SB 145**

**COMMITTEE: Finance**

**POSITION: Oppose**

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**TITLE: State Board of Social Work Examiners – Temporary License to Practice Social Work**

**BILL ANALYSIS:** Senate Bill (SB) 145 creates a temporary license for applicants of the LBSW and LMSW licenses. It permits applicants to practice social work in Maryland without passing the national examination by the Association of Social Work Boards.

**POSITION AND RATIONALE:** The Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners (the Board) strongly opposes SB 145 and believes it is counter to the Board’s mission of protecting the public. The national examination determines if an applicant has the minimum competence to begin practicing a profession in a manner that is safe, competent and ethical. This is different from possessing a social work degree which addresses learned fundamental knowledge and skill needed to practice safely.

Social workers work with and treat vulnerable populations including abused and neglected children, people with behavioral health problems, and survivors of crime and domestic violence. A temporary license would permit these applicants to address these problems without demonstrating competence. The bill presumes that applicants have some level of practice experience which would make a temporary license acceptable, page 2, lines 18-20 “THE BOARD SHALL ISSUE A TEMPORARY LICENSE TO AN APPLICANT WHO, EXCEPT FOR PASSING THE EXAMINATION, HAS MET THE APPROPRIATE EDUCATION AND **EXPERIENCE** REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SUBTITLE.” However, in order to receive the LBSW or LMSW license currently, an applicant simply must show that the required degree has been earned, that the criminal background check provides no impediment and that the applicant has passed the required exam. **No experience** is required for this entry level of licensure. Therefore, it is our contention that implementation of a temporary license which does not require an exam has the potential to expose the public to unethical or incompetent practice. Additionally, the use of the word “shall” has been added to that same section of this bill, as opposed to similar bills in the last two years whereby the word “may” was used giving the Board a level of discretion. The Board strongly opposes the lack of discretion in this legislation.

Moreover, the section of the bill which states the circumstances under which a temporary license shall be granted is also concerning; these include an unforeseen circumstance, and an act or occurrence which prevents an examination from being available to the applicant for a period of at least 7 business days. No clear definition of these unforeseen circumstances is given and

determining this on an individual basis for each applicant would place an impossible burden on board staff who are already stretched to the limit in their efforts to grant the permanent licenses currently required by statute.

Finally, if enacted, it would place a burden on employers and the Board to ensure that those with a temporary license reapply for a permanent license, or not practice without a permanent license. The temporary license will create confusion for clients and employers who may not understand the nuances of what a temporary license means.

For these reasons the Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners requests an unfavorable report on SB 145. If you need more information, please contact the Board's Executive Director, Dr. Daphne McClellan at 410-764-4722 or [daphne.mcclellan@maryland.gov](mailto:daphne.mcclellan@maryland.gov).

*The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.*