



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 workforce¹. 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 2029.²

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.

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¹ 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

² Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/social-workers.htm#tab-1