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Judicial Proceedings Committee



**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
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The House Health and Government Operations Committee  
The Honorable Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk  
Room 241 House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

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

Dear Chairwoman Pena-Melnyk, and members of the Committee,

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.

The cross-file to this bill, House Bill 103 is in a different configuration, which I hope can be resolved and will be more than happy to work on with members of both chambers.

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