



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