



Montgomery County Counseling Center

February 11, 2024

Subject: Support SB 409

As a Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT), I am writing to ask you to support SB 409, which seeks to ease licensure by endorsement requirements for marriage and family therapists in Maryland.

You may not know this, but MFTs are the rarest type of mental health professional because our harshest licensing requirements deters candidates from pursuing this licensure. And yet this specialty often leads to the most sustainable and effective results in mental, emotional, and behavioral health.

Given the imbalance of supply and demand of MFT candidates, not only is there a substantial impact on mental health in our community, but there is also a substantial impact on the business and hiring practices of our local practices and agencies.

Senate Bill 409 will allow an MFT who is already fully licensed in another state to apply to the Maryland licensing board, and the board will grant the applicant a license on the basis of a valid, unencumbered license in another state without the need for additional documents or delay. This means that if we find a qualified candidate to hire from outside of Maryland, we can immediately begin to support the needs of the community and the needs of the business.

SB 409 will both strengthen the marriage and family therapy profession, and help address shortages of quality mental health clinicians. It will allow for qualified providers to begin serving our community with efficiency and ease. It will prevent unnecessary burnout and income delays for both potential employees and employers alike, who are eager to serve the overwhelming needs of our community. Removing unnecessary licensing barriers will allow more licensed and qualified individuals the ability to practice in Maryland!

I appreciate your attention and support to this promising legislation.

Laura Goldstein, LCMFT, LCM625

Founder, Montgomery County Counseling Center