



# Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work

TO: The Honorable Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Chair  
Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee  
The Honorable Susan McComas

FROM: Judith Gallant, LCSW-C, Director, GWSCSW Legislation and Advocacy

DATE: February 22, 2024

RE: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT** – House Bill 1289 – *State Board of Social Work Examiners – Practice Social Work – Definition and Scope of Authority*

---

The Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work (GWSCSW) was established in 1975 to promote and advance the specialization of clinical practice within the social work profession. Through our lobbying, education, community building, and social justice activities, we affirm our commitment to the needs of those in our profession, their clients, and the community at large. On behalf of GWSCSW, we **support with amendment** House Bill 1289.

House Bill 1289 would refine the definition of "practice social work" to provide clarity on the types of assessments that licensed social workers can conduct. Additionally, it outlines the scope of practice for individuals licensed as certified social worker-clinical, specifying their authority in areas such as evaluation, diagnosis, treatment, and provision of psychotherapy for various conditions, including mental health and substance use disorders. GWSCSW is supportive of the intent of the bill but would need two minor amendments as outlined below.

The first amendment would address the language on page 2, line 10, where it defines "biopsychosocial treatment". To clarify, the bill refers to "treatment of biopsychosocial conditions," however, there is no treatment that is called biopsychosocial. Biopsychosocial is an approach. The term biopsychosocial was developed as a model of how to think about clients' issues, by thinking of the totality of what affects people: biology, psychology, and social environment. That language would need to be amended to "biopsychosocial approach".

Additionally, the last provision in the bill grants the State Board of Social Work Examiners the authority to establish regulations regarding acts of social work that may not be explicitly authorized by existing laws but are permitted under certain conditions determined by the Board. As this is duplicative to what the law already says, we would delete the last provision of the bill entirely.

*See page 4, lines 10-18:*

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

**Contacts:** Director, Legislation & Advocacy Program: Judy Gallant, LCSW-C; email: [judy.gallant@verizon.net](mailto:judy.gallant@verizon.net); mobile (301) 717-1004  
Legislative Consultants: Christine K. Krone and Pamela Metz Kasemeyer, Schwartz, Metz, Wise & Kauffman, PA,  
20 West Street, Annapolis, MD 21401

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

~~(B) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, THE BOARD MAY ADOPT REGULATIONS REGARDING REQUIREMENTS FOR ENGAGEMENT IN ACTS OF SOCIAL WORK THAT ARE NOT SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED UNDER THIS TITLE BUT ARE OTHERWISE AUTHORIZED BY STATUTE OR REGULATION AND MAY: (1) BE PERFORMED UNDER ANY CONDITION AUTHORIZED BY THE BOARD; (2) REQUIRE EDUCATION AND CLINICAL EXPERIENCE IN ADDITION TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS TITLE; AND (3) REQUIRE BOARD CERTIFICATION.~~

With the amendments noted, GWSCSW supports House Bill 1289.

**For more information call:**

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