
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 34
Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact
Health and Government Operations Committee
February 1, 2024

I strongly support HB34 because it would facilitate interstate practice.

Good afternoon, Chair Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Bonnie Cullison Rosapepe, and House and Health and Government Operations Committee members. My name is Ana N Rivera Ortiz, and I reside in District 7. As a student, I must balance the demands of my academic pursuits and the responsibilities of advocating for social justice and fair access to universal healthcare. Pursuing a career in social work is a challenging yet noble journey, particularly when struggling with financial constraints. Many students like me must take out student loans to cover our social work tuition and household expenses. On top of these challenges, the current licensure system adds a layer of complexity and stress to our already complex lives with its state-specific requirements.

HB 34 is a unique legislative proposal that aims to assist social workers and those who aspire to become social workers. The proposal acknowledges the difficulties faced by social workers in balancing their professional goals with personal responsibilities, such as spending quality time with their families. Furthermore, social workers often face financial challenges due to their low salaries and the high cost of being licensed in multiple states. Therefore, we seek your support for HB 34, which aims to address these issues.

HB 34 aims to solve the challenges faced by social and behavioral workers when they move from one state to another or when they need to be licensed in multiple states to perform their job. It establishes a coordinated data system and a streamlined process for the recognition of licenses, which makes it easier for them to continue providing continuity care to students who relocate for college and increases care in underserved areas. Additionally, HB 34 assists spouses of active military by allowing social work spouses to continue providing virtual services or start a new job right away, even if their spouse is deployed to another state. I urge a favorable report on HB34.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for supporting HB 34.

Sincerely,
Ana N Rivera Ortiz

Social Work Advocates for Social Change is a coalition of MSW students at the University of Maryland School of Social Work that seeks to promote equity and justice through public policy, and to engage the communities impacted by public policy in the policymaking process.



**Social Work Advocates
for Social Change**

For more information, please contact
Elizabeth Guillen umswasc@gmail.com