



Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work

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

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

DATE: February 1, 2024

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 34 – *Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact*

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** House Bill 34.

In addition to the Social Work Compact, the Maryland legislature will consider at least two other compacts this session as awareness spreads to the many benefits to consumers, licensure boards, and the social work profession. Benefits include:

- Providing a tool for addressing workforce shortages by allowing increased availability of mental health clinicians to care for vulnerable DC children and adults who are suffering as a result of the mental health crisis and the scarcity of clinicians;
- Supporting military personnel and spouses to more easily maintain their social work licenses when relocating and serve those in the jurisdiction they move to;
- Enhancing mobility for clinical social workers who meet the Compact uniform licensure requirements; and
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure by creating a shared data system, which reduces administrative burdens and application processing time.

The Social Work Compact will allow LCSW-Cs to work in other states without having to become licensed separately in these states under certain conditions: if the LCSW-C's home state joins the Compact; if the LCSW-C then joins the Compact as an individual and pays the set fee for a separate Compact license; and if the LCSW-C has no actionable complaints.

The Compact must be passed by the state or jurisdictional legislature for that jurisdiction to join the Compact. The legislation must be accepted, as written, by the Council of State Governments and

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cannot be changed by an individual state legislature. The Compact will be overseen by a Commission, which will create the rules to run the Compact. Members of the Commission will be regulators from states that join the Compact. If Maryland is one of the first seven states to pass the Interstate Social Work Compact, our representative will be part of the initial membership of the Commission, which will be creating the rules for the Compact.

For more information call:

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