



Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work

Testimony on HB 34 – Social Work Licensure Compact

Maryland House Health and Government Operations Committee

February, 2024

I thank the committee for the opportunity to share our strong support for House Bill 34. I am Judith Gallant and represent both the Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work (GWSCSW) and the Clinical Social Work Association (CSWA). The Society includes clinical social workers practicing in three jurisdictions – Washington DC, Maryland and northern Virginia. The CSWA is a nationwide umbrella association of state-based clinical social work societies.

The concern most frequently voiced by our members is the current roadblock in providing continuity of mental health care to patients who move out of state. Imagine this: my patient needs to move to Virginia to care for an elderly parent. I am not licensed in Virginia and I would currently be unable to continue to work with this patient unless they traveled back to MD for every session. I can only continue working with that person through the additional expense, documentation, and waiting for application review and approval for a Virginia license.

Were a patient – at a time of great stress – cut off from the ongoing care of a trusted psychotherapist, that person could experience a deterioration of his or her underlying condition, especially if the patient suffered from an illness such as Major Depressive Disorder.

Our National organization hears concerns about this problem from its members throughout our country. Without this Social Work Compact becoming law, patients have unnecessary roadblocks to access continuing care from a trusted provider.

Another benefit: With Maryland in the Social Work Compact, social-worker spouses of our military members who need to relocate when the service member is reassigned to another state are given the ability to maintain a stable income from their profession without needing to become re-licensed in the new state.

We urge a favorable report from this Committee and a speedy passage by the General Assembly. If Maryland is one of the first seven states to pass the compact, it will have a strong voice in setting the rules.

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