

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Senator Paul Pinsky, Chairperson  
**EHEA Committee**  
Maryland Senate  
11 Bladen Street  
Room 2, West Wing  
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR SB 571** – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky and Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 571 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Vivian Morgan and I am a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor who resides and practices in Baltimore County, MD.

This Compact is important to me because this service delivery method is necessary for some people due to transportation, health, socio-economic, and other issues that prohibit travel. Mental health is as important as other health issues and should be treated as such. I work with many high school students who go to school out of state and are adjusting to significant life changes and need the support of their community providers. I also believe that individuals have the right to find practitioners who fit their need, no matter where they are located. Mental health services have a component in which the relationship of the counselor and client is critical to the efficacy of care.

Much like existing licensure compacts for nurses, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists and EMS personnel, the Counseling Compact will increase licensure portability for practitioners while allowing state regulatory boards to better protect consumers through enhanced sharing of licensure information.

The Counseling Compact will benefit those in need of critical lifesaving mental health support and counselors by:

- Enhancing mobility for counselors who meet uniform licensure requirements;
- Increasing access to care for clients;
- Ensuring continuity of care when clients or counselors relocate or travel to other states;
- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain certifications when relocating;
- Preserving and strengthening the current system of state licensure.

The Counseling Compact preserves each state’s authority to regulate the profession. It does not alter scope of practice or impact state practice law. Counselors utilizing the Compact must abide by the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing, including adhering to that state’s scope of practice.

I strongly urge you to support this Counseling Compact.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

[TITLE], [ADDRESS]