

February 18, 2021

The Honorable Del. Shane Pendergrass, Chairperson  
Health and Government Operations  
Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen St. RM 241  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: SUPPORT FOR HB 736 – Interstate Licensed Professional Counselors Compact**

Dear Chairperson Pendergrass and Distinguished Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for HB 736 on the “Counseling Compact” to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Catherine Eaton and I am a life long Maryland resident with a small business working as a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor in Montgomery County. I also work as a remote supervisor for the Tri-County Youth Services Bureau, Inc, which provides school based counseling services for Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary’s Counties.

This Intrastate Compact is imperative for Maryland clinicians and residents because many of our clientele move among the DVM area and clients want to continue services with their current provider instead of starting over or having to join a long waitlist in their new residence. By providing clinicians the opportunity to practice over state lines via telehealth, we can increase access of care with qualified mental health professionals at a time when the need is greatest due to the pandemic.

There are similar intrastate licensing compacts already in place for other medical professionals such as nurses and adding this services for licensed clinical counselors would be mutually beneficial to all states involved.

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 legislation and have Maryland be the first state to join the Counseling Compact!

Sincerely,

Catherine J. Eaton, LCPC, GCDF, NCC  
**Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and Board Approved Clinical Supervisor**  
**Global Career Development Facilitator**  
**National Board-Certified Counselor, Maryland License #LC5355**  
**Secretary, Association for Adult Development and Aging (AADA)**  
**Trustee, National Employment Counseling Association (NECA)**  
**Past-President, Maryland Counseling Association (MCA 2018)**

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