



February 10, 2021

House Health and Government Operations Committee

House Bill 732

Health Care Practitioners – Telehealth – Out-of-State Health Care Practitioners

Position: Oppose

I am writing on behalf of the National Association of Social Workers, Maryland Chapter (NASW-MD) in opposition to *House Bill 732 – Health Care Practitioners – Telehealth – Out-of-State Health Care Practitioners*. This bill would authorize an out-of-state health care practitioner to provide telehealth services to a client located in the state.

The goal of having wider access to practice telehealth across state lines is a worthy one. While the COVID 19 pandemic has led to relatively open borders on an emergency basis, this is not an optimal solution. We join many of our allied professions in the belief that an interstate compact is the best option and it is something that we are very interested in pursuing. A compact is a better path for reciprocity.

The proposed legislation would allow out-of-state practitioners to simply register with Maryland licensing boards. However, without safeguards in place to assure that out-of-state practitioners are held to the same standards and subject to the same penalties as those health care providers who are licensed in Maryland, we will create an unlevel playing field which will disadvantage Maryland's practitioners.

For these reasons we urge an unfavorable report on HB 732. If we can provide any further information, please contact me at dmcclellan.naswmd@socialworkers.org

Respectfully,

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