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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
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**Testimony in Support of
House Bill 1061: Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program - Private
Company Employees With a Master's Degree in Social Work - Eligible Employment
March 14th, 2023**

Chair Barnes and esteemed members of the Appropriations Committee, it is my pleasure to come before you and offer testimony in favor of **House Bill 1061: Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program - Private Company Employees With a Master's Degree in Social Work - Eligible Employment**. This bill would provide loan repayment assistance to social workers who contract with the State and with local governments. There is an amendment coming that more directly addresses the relationship between private social work providers and the State.

This bill would offer student loan repayment assistance to social workers who work for for-profit companies but still serve in a public-facing role. Like their peers who work in the public and nonprofit sectors, these individuals often earn little compensation but provide vital services that are fundamentally a public good. Unlike their peers in those sectors, these individuals are barred from much of the existing financial assistance that would help them pay back their student loans.

This bill is needed due to the ongoing workforce shortage and would be a worthy expansion of existing programs to address a real need in the State.

I urge a favorable report on **House Bill 1061**. Thank you.