

Testimony

Re: SB0871

Date: 3/9/2023

The purpose of this letter is to submit written testimony opposing Bill SB0871. I am a licensed social worker in the state of Maryland that passed a licensing examination in 1999. I prepared for and passed the licensing examination after working very hard to show proof of knowledge gained during my Masters Level education. I am absolutely opposed to anyone having the ability to practice as a social worker without being properly licensed. Secondly, I am opposed to anyone having the ability to practice as a social worker without passing a licensing examination that gives them the opportunity to demonstrate proof of the knowledge that was obtained as a student in an accredited institution.

It would be without legitimacy and very dangerous to allow any persons to practice as a social worker. without given the chance to prove the knowledge that they have obtained. This can only be done by passing a licensing examination.

As an African American woman who has personally witnessed the “watered down” effect of the social worker profession, I am a strong advocate to upholding the high standard that was in place when I began practice in 1999. I have seen persons enter the social work profession, specifically in the clinical setting without being prepared to do so. I have also witnessed others outside of the social work profession exercising their right to “practice” or give social work advice regarding a patient without having the proper knowledge to do so.

To pass this bill would further lessen the high standard of professionalism that we, as licensed social workers have tried so hard to uphold. It would also put those in the community who need our services at risk in the event that they so happen to be treated by one who has not shown the ability to practice as a social worker by passing a licensing examination.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to weigh in on this bill. I will continue to advocate for proof of 100% accountability for those who desire to practice as a social work professional.

Kimberly Stroud, LMSW