

I am writing to express my support for bills SB871 (with the amendment of the more diversified workgroup) and SB872. I am very concerned about the discrepancies in pass rates for individuals who are non-white, older, hard-of-hearing, etc.-The licensing exams do nothing to "protect the public" or ensure the integrity and quality of individuals entering the social work profession. What the exams actually do is demonstrate people's abilities to take a very specific type of test. I say this as someone who passed both the LMSW and LCSW-C the first time. I look at my passing as a combination of luck and privilege. There is a cultural component to thinking about things in a certain way. Many people who are excellent potential social workers have a hard time answering questions in a way that is so abstract and non-realistic as they are asked on the exam. The questions do not reflect real life at all (I have not used any of the information on the test in my real-life practice in the past 10 years!) and do not show who will be able to provide excellent social work services in the future. I would love to see additional research on these topics so a more effective way of licensing can be established retaining the professionalism and excellence of social work services in our state and nationwide. I think pausing the exams is the right thing to do while research is done in the workgroup to determine causes of these discrepancies and plan next steps. Thank you for considering a favorable vote on this legislation.

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