



Senate Finance Committee
February 12, 2024
Senate Bill 0204
Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact

SUPPORT

We are a collective of Maryland licensed clinical social workers, clinical professional counselors, and master-level social work graduates, operating in private practice, and in diverse state, federal, and for-profit entities, committed to offering culturally infused professional development and networking experiences. While not formally organized, our network operates in the spirit of collegiality, information sharing, and mutual support.

We write to express our unequivocal support for the proposed Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact.

As providers originating from underrepresented communities and serving those from culturally biased and underrepresented backgrounds, we recognize the critical need for inclusion in vital conversations. Endorsing Maryland's participation as a charter member state in the interstate compact is crucial to ensuring that social work providers from Maryland have a seat at the table.

We endorse this legislation as it aligns with the evolving needs of care. Operating within the present limitations on practicing across state lines poses substantial challenges for us and the diverse range of clients we serve. The immediate benefits of the compact are evident: it provides flexibility for clients temporarily relocating outside of Maryland, alleviates the burdens associated with seeking licensure in multiple states, and directly addresses the shortage of trained licensed clinical social workers.

Moreover, an often-overlooked aspect of the compact is its impact on professional development content creators and trainers. With its implementation, we will have the opportunity to pursue activities typically governed by licensed social work, such as social work education, research, and administration. Currently, licensees must obtain various licenses to provide contracted services, creating significant barriers and economic disenfranchisement, especially for historically marginalized communities.

In conclusion, this collective of providers, The Black Collective Training Network, strongly encourage you to vote in favor of this pivotal initiative that will enhance mental health care accessibility, support licensed social work providers, and contribute to the overall well-being of our communities.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Dionne Brown-Bushrod, LCSW-C
Shonda Conyers, LCSW-C
Candace Hawkins, LCSW-C
Barbie Johnson-Lewis, LCSW-C
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