



## Maryland Community Health System

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Senate Finance Committee</b>
<b>Bill Number:</b>	<b>Senate Bill 204</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact</b>
<b>Hearing Date:</b>	<b>February 13, 2024</b>
<b>Position:</b>	<b>Support</b>

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The Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) supports *Senate Bill 204 - Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact*. The bill establishes a licensure compact for social workers, similar to other licensure compacts, social workers would be authorized to practice in all Compact member states under a multistate licensure.

Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) is a network of federally qualified health centers that serve underserved communities in urban, suburban, and rural areas across Maryland. We are facing a crisis with the shortage of behavioral health professions in Maryland, with 21 of 24 jurisdictions designated as a mental health professional shortage area.

<sup>i</sup> Licensure compacts and other reciprocity arrangements will allow Maryland providers to recruit health professionals, including social workers, from other states to provide in-person or telehealth services.

The Social Work Licensure Compact is modeled after similar compacts adopted in Maryland for professional counselors and psychologists. The legislation is pending in 23 states, including our neighboring states of Pennsylvania and West Virginia.<sup>ii</sup>

MCHS supports this bill because it will help federally qualified health centers and other providers to recruit social workers and meet the needs of our patients. We request a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at [relliott@policypartners.net](mailto:relliott@policypartners.net).

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<sup>i</sup> <https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/shortage-area/hpsa-find>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://swcompact.org/compact-map/>