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The Hon. Pamela Beidle, Chair
Senate Finance Committee
Maryland General Assembly
3E Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Hon. Katherine Klausmeier, Vice Chair
Senate Finance Committee
Maryland General Assembly
123 James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Pyramid Healthcare Testimony In Favor of Senate Bill 204 – An Act Concerning the “Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact”

Dear Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and distinguished members of the Committee:

The Pyramid Healthcare, Inc. (“Pyramid Healthcare”) family of companies urges the Committee to favorably adopt SB 204/HB 34 to have Maryland join the Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact (“SW Compact”).

As background, Pyramid Healthcare was founded in 1999 and is an integrated behavioral healthcare system that employs over 3,100 professionals caring for 12,000 unique commercial and Medicaid patients per day throughout our residential and outpatient locations across eight states. We offer a treatment continuum providing comprehensive behavioral healthcare specialties, including: substance use disorder, mental health, autism, and eating disorder treatment across an integrated network of service lines and affiliated behavioral healthcare organizations. In Maryland, we operate four locations: a detox & residential and an outpatient treatment center in California, a detox and residential treatment center in Charlotte Hall, and a detox & residential treatment center in Joppa. In total, we have approximately 170 substance use disorder residential treatment beds for adult Medicaid clients across the state. We are currently under construction on our new Prince George’s facility and expected to begin operations in mid-2024 with approximately 75 detox and residential substance use treatment beds for adults with substance use disorder. That facility will be located in outside of Bowie and will serve the residents of Prince George’s County, Anne Arundel County, and throughout central Maryland.

Maryland has already recognized the value of interstate licensure compacts, having previously adopted the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact, Counseling Compact, Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, Nurses Licensure Compact, Occupational Therapy Compact, Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT), and the Physical Therapy Compact. Missouri has already adopted the SW Compact and legislation is currently pending in 23 other states.¹ In addition, the SW Compact is supported by the Council of State Governments (“CSG”), the U.S. Department of Defense (“DoD”), and the Association of Social Work Boards (“ASWB”), as well as numerous other organizations who helped develop the SW Compact.²

¹ <https://swcompact.org/compact-map/>.

² <https://swcompact.org/>.

The Social Work Licensure Compact is an interstate occupational licensure compact that allows social workers with bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and clinical licenses to provide services to clients in all other Compact states instead of having to file duplicate license applications in each state in which they practice.³ Each Compact state extends licensure reciprocity to the other states in the Compact. In order to be eligible, a social worker must first already be eligible for or hold a social work license in their primary state of residence and meet other criteria. After the social worker's eligibility is determined, they receive a multistate license and may begin working in any SW Compact member state.

There are over 500,000 licensed social workers across the United States and Pyramid Healthcare employs many social workers across our counseling, operations, clinical, quality, compliance, and utilization review teams, among other functions. The SW Compact will streamline the licensing process while reducing administrative burden and allowing social workers to quickly resume providing care. It does so while protecting patient and public safety.

Joining the SW Compact will facilitate multistate practice and reduce the barriers to license portability for our current and potential employees by easing mobility across state lines, expanding employment opportunities to address crucial workforce shortages, allowing continuity of care for our patients that move across state lines, allows the use of telehealth to be leveraged, and supports the relocation of military spouses and their families.

Given Maryland's unique geographic location, bordering Pennsylvania, Virginia, the District of Columbia, Delaware, and West Virginia—as well as the presence of major military installations where members of the military and their families are frequently relocated into and out of the region, the SW Compact will positively impact the state's ability to attract and retain qualified and desperately needed social workers.

Please adopt SB 204/HB 34 to have Maryland join the Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact.

Thank you for your support of behavioral health providers – including those in both mental health and substance use – in Maryland and for considering our policy proposals and recommendations on behalf of Pyramid Healthcare. If we can provide any additional information or materials, please contact me at crosier@pyramidhc.com or 667-270-1582. In addition, we invite you or a member of the Committee or staff to reach out and schedule a visit to one of our Maryland locations sometime soon to learn more about our programs and services.

Sincerely,



Collan B. Rosier
Vice President of Government Relations

**CC: Members, Senate Finance Committee
Tammy Kraft, Committee Manager**

³ <https://swcompact.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/30/2023/02/Social-Work-Licensure-Compact-Fact-Sheet.pdf>.