

Dear Senators and Delegates,

I strongly urge the committee to gather more specific information on the potential impact of the Social Work (SW) Interstate Compact before voting, as the current information is unclear and lacks precision. It is important to address the following areas of ambiguity:

1. The involvement of state Medicaid, state Medicare, and private insurance companies in participating in the SW Interstate compact for multiple states has not been clearly explained.
2. Considering the understaffed situation of the Maryland Board of Social Work, as evident from their staff members page on their website, it is crucial to understand their capacity to process applications for the SW Interstate Compact. Additionally, the realistic turnaround time for processing interstate applications needs to be determined, especially considering the current lengthy processing time for existing state based applications.
3. When conflicting interests arise among different states based on existing state legislation, it is essential to understand how the states in the SW Interstate Compact will navigate this issue. For example, if Maryland is a recognized Blue state and Red states enter the SW Interstate Compact, it is important to clarify whether Maryland Social Workers will continue to be guided by existing Maryland State legislation or be subjected to guidelines set up by other states due to patients residing in states with conflicting legislation. Will Maryland Social Workers be bound to Maryland guidelines only or the guidelines of each state where the patient resides?
4. There are concerns regarding the overlapping issues between the recently implemented Work Group and the interstate compact, as both rely on the existing ASWB exam as their foundation. It is important to note that there is currently no other nationwide exam implemented for Social Workers.

Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that while the Social Work Interstate Compact has the potential to provide mobility for Social Workers, it does not address the shortage of Social Workers in Maryland, nor does it increase diversity amongst Social Workers in Maryland, nor does it discourage Maryland Social Workers from seeking opportunities in other states, potentially exacerbating the Social Worker shortage in Maryland. This is because the Social Worker interstate Compact is only open to Social Workers who already have their licensure.

(This is the ASWB pass rate analysis which led to the advocacy surrounding the Social Work exam).

<https://www.aswb.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/2022-ASWB-Exam-Pass-Rate-Analysis.pdf>

I would like to thank you for your attention and consideration of this request for more information gathering before final decisions are made.

Sincerely,

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