



February 20, 2024

**State Board of Social Work Examiners-Continuing Education Programs-Approval
of Authorized Sponsors- House Bill 1120**

Health and Government Operations Committee

Position: SUPPORT

The Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth (MARFY) is an association of private child caring organizations providing foster care, group homes, and other services through more than 200 programs across Maryland. The members of MARFY represent providers who serve Maryland's most vulnerable children who are in out of home placements due to abuse, neglect or severe mental health, and medical needs. We operate group homes, treatment foster care programs and independent living programs, primarily serving the foster care population as well as a juvenile services population.

MARFY writes to express our strong support for House Bill 1120, which seeks to establish a more inclusive and accessible process for approving authorized sponsors of continuing programs for social workers in Maryland. MARFY is an organization of providers that understand the critical role, that education plays in enhancing the competency, effectiveness, and ethical standards of social work practice.

Continuing education is the cornerstone of professional growth and development for social workers, enabling them to stay current with the best practices, emerging trends, and legislative changes that impact the profession and the communities we serve. By requiring the State Board of Social Work Examiners to create a process for reviewing and approving a wider array of sponsors for continuing education programs, House Bill 1120 addresses a significant barrier to accessing diverse and high-quality educational resources.

Implementing this legislation will not only benefit social workers by providing them with more varied and accessible continuing education options but will also ultimately enhance the quality of social work services provided to Maryland residents. As social workers are

better equipped to meet the complex needs of those they serve, the positive impacts will be felt throughout our communities.

Overall, MARFY supports House Bill 1120 and the legislation's commitment to the professional development of social workers and the well-being of the individuals and communities they serve. **It is for these reasons we politely ask for a favorable report on House Bill 1007.**

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Maryland Association of
Resources for Families & Youth