



In (FAV) of: Social Work Licensure Compact (SB0174 and HB0345)

January 24, 2025

I am Risa Garon, and I sincerely appreciate your efforts and commitment to improve and support our communities. I have been a licensed clinical social worker for almost 40 years. I founded, currently direct, and work with many families at the National Family Resiliency Center (NFRC), a nonprofit mental health center serving families in all Maryland communities, particularly Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties. I'm reaching out to request your support for the Social Work Licensure Compact SB0174 and HB0345.

We are a universal community, and it is time we were supported by how our contemporary mental health system needs to work. Why terminate with a client because the client is moving out of state? Why should we not be permitted to help co-parents who would like to work with us but live in different states? Providing continuity of care is very valuable for citizens in our community. This legislation would allow us to work with other family members that clients want to work with who reside out of state.

Social workers in Maryland are carefully monitored and held accountable. This legislation will help our community's professionals and residents and the social work profession by building consistency and cooperation across states. The Social Work Licensure Compact law (SB0174 and HB0345) would allow social workers to reach more individuals in rural areas who are isolated and are in great need of mental health support, as well as provide consistency through a comprehensive list of licensed providers.

The work that social workers provided during Covid demonstrated the integrity and the needed contribution of social work care to help our state and nation. During Covid, it became apparent that we, as professionals, were competent to meet with our clients all over the country. We followed the Covid protocol and were able to help many clients in need.

Thank you for your consideration. I encourage you to vote in support of the Social Work Licensure Compact SB0174 and HB0345.

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