



# Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work

Senate Finance Committee

February 11, 2025

Senate Bill 458 – *Health Occupations – Structural Racism Training*

## POSITION: LETTER OF INFORMATION

The Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work (GWSCSW) was established in 1975 to promote and advance the specialization of clinical practice within the social work profession. Through our lobbying, education, community building, and social justice activities, we affirm our commitment to the needs of those in our profession, their clients, and the community at large. On behalf of GWSCSW, we submit this letter of information for Senate Bill 458.

Senate Bill 458 would require all licensed health professionals, including clinical social workers, to complete a one-time implicit bias and structural racism training program, either upon initial licensure or at the first renewal after April 1, 2026.

We recognize the critical importance of addressing implicit bias and structural racism in health care. While we support efforts to improve equitable care, we are concerned that what was originally a one-time requirement may become an ongoing expectation without clear justification.

To balance the value of this training with the existing professional education requirements of clinical social workers, we respectfully suggest two possible alternatives:

1. **Targeting New Licensees:** Since most currently licensed professionals have already completed implicit bias training within the last few years, this requirement could be applied only to new licensees who have not yet done so.
2. **Incorporating Training into Existing Requirements:** If this training is to be required for all licensees, we recommend allowing employer-mandated programs (such as those required by hospital systems) to fulfill the requirement. Additionally, participation in a qualified course should count toward the continuing education (CE) credits required for license renewal.

Clinical social workers already complete extensive CE credits (40 units, every two years) to maintain licensure and provide high-quality care. While we fully support training that enhances cultural competency and equitable care, we believe that integrating this requirement into existing CE frameworks would be a more effective and reasonable approach. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can provide further insight on this matter.

### For more information call:

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