



# BALTIMORE CITY

SUBSTANCE ABUSE DIRECTORATE

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## House Health and Government Operations Committee January 23, 2025

### HB 345 Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact Support

On behalf of the Baltimore City Substance Abuse Directorate (the Directorate), I write to express our support for HB 345, Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact. The Directorate is a member group of organizations, made up of substance use disorder (SUD) treatment programs that serve Baltimore City.

The Directorate unequivocally supports HB 345, which will increase the accessibility to services that social workers are able to provide, across state lines. With the passing of this compact, there will be relief from several redundant, burdensome, and stringent requirements that are associated with the social work requirements to work across various states. Additionally, clients within many communities will be able to have more access to social workers, which is a profession that is imperative in meeting behavioral health needs.

The workforce shortage has made it increasingly difficult to recruit and hire the needed clinicians to work in Maryland's behavioral health programs. Social workers are trained and well equipped to address many behavioral health disorders, while empowering clients. If passed, these much-needed skills could reach many more clients who are in need of resources and counseling to meet their behavioral health needs. In addition, Professional Counselors in Maryland already benefit from this compact, and for the aforementioned reasons, social workers should have the benefit of this inclusion.

We as a membership urge the members of the committee to pass this legislation.

Sincerely,

*Ashley Archie, LCSW-C*

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