



Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work

Testimony on HB345 – The Interstate Compact for Licensed Social Workers

Maryland House

January, 2025

I am writing as an LCSW-C, and as the Director of the Legislation and Advocacy Program of the Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work (GWSCSW), which includes clinical social workers practicing in the three jurisdictions of the DMV, to express my strong support for House Bill 345, The Interstate Compact for Licensed Social Workers. The Compact is an agreement between multiple states that allows social workers licensed in one compact member state to practice in other participating states without having to obtain separate licenses in each of those states.

The Compact provides numerous key benefits:

1. **Improved Access and Continuity of Care:** By allowing social workers to practice across state lines, the Compact enhances access to mental health services, by ensuring that patients can continue care with the same social worker if they move to another participating state, promoting continuity of care. This is especially important in an area such as the DMV, where a client or a provider can move just a few miles away and change jurisdictions.
2. **Addressing Workforce Shortages:** The Compact helps address the shortage of mental health professionals which occurs in Maryland, by making it easier for qualified social workers to practice in states with high demand for services, particularly in areas with clinician shortages.
3. **Support for Military Families:** The Compact is especially beneficial for military personnel and their families, as it allows them to maintain their social work licenses when relocating due to service duties, avoiding delays and complications when they move between states.
4. **Increased Mobility for Social Workers:** Social workers can practice across state lines in other Compact member states, increasing their professional opportunities and the ability to move for personal or career reasons without the need for additional licensure.
5. **Streamlined Processes:** The Compact creates a shared system of data and standards, which reduces administrative burdens for licensure boards, speeds up the application process, and ensures that state licensure standards are consistently met across participating states.

The Compact is a significant step forward for our profession. I hope you will join us in supporting this important piece of legislation to help strengthen our behavioral health workforce and improve the well-being of Marylanders we serve.

Thank you,

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