

January 28, 2025

Delegate Joseline Pena-Melnyk
Chair, House and Government Operations Committee
240 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk,

Hospice of the Chesapeake is writing today in support of **HB0345 – Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact**.

As a regional healthcare organization caring for those living with serious complex illness, we often face the challenges of recruiting and retaining quality professionals to care for those in our community. As well, recruitment and retention are significant expenses to our not-for-profit organization.

Specifically, we believe HB0345 achieves the following which in turns supports our mission of caring for life throughout the journey with illness and loss:

- **Increased Mobility for Social Workers:** Ability to practice across state lines without needing to obtain a separate license for each state, providing greater professional flexibility and opportunities.
- **Addressing Workforce Shortages:** Many states experience shortages of social workers, particularly in rural or underserved areas. The compact allows states to tap into a broader pool of professionals to meet demand.
- **Improved Access to Services:** Clients in underserved areas or those affected by crises or natural disasters can have quicker access to qualified social workers, leading to faster and more effective interventions.
- **Promoting Telehealth and Remote Services:** With the growth of telehealth, a compact would enable social workers to provide services across state lines, addressing the increasing need for remote health care and other social services.
- **Reduced Barriers for Social Workers in Transition:** Social workers relocating for personal or professional reasons wouldn't have to navigate the sometimes lengthy and costly process of obtaining a new license in each state.
- **Strengthening the Social Work Profession:** Facilitating interstate practice would enhance the social work profession's ability to respond to national challenges, such as mental health crises, homelessness, and substance abuse.

- **Boosting Rural and Border Community Support:** States with borders that are geographically close to one another could see improved coordination of services across state lines, benefiting communities in those areas.
- **Cost Savings for Social Workers:** Without needing to pay for multiple licenses or meet varying state-specific requirements, social workers can save money, allowing them to focus more resources on professional development.
- **Better Emergency Response:** In times of national crisis or emergency, a compact would facilitate the quick deployment of qualified social workers to the affected areas, speeding up recovery and support efforts.

We proudly support HB0345.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Reb Miller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Reb" and the last name "Miller" clearly distinguishable.

Rebecca Miller, MSW
Chief Executive Officer