



March 12, 2025

Dear Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee,

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of **HB 1521 – State Board of Social Work Examiners - Membership and Examination Requirements**, which will be heard tomorrow in your committee. We appreciate your dedication to addressing workforce shortages and ensuring Marylanders have access to the social work services they need.

I am Dr. Anna McPhatter. I have served as a Social Work practitioner and Social Work Educator over 45 years. I have taught in 6 small, medium and large Social Work programs at the Bachelors, Masters and PhD levels. Currently, I am completing my 30th year as a tenured Full Professor and Founding Dean of the SSW at Morgan State University.

I have also served as a Commissioner on the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE), the accreditation body for Social Work programs and conducted numerous accreditation site visits all over the country from Texas to Vermont, and Mississippi. As a well-prepared social work practitioner and educator, I took the exam and passed by only 2 points.

I am extremely confident in expressing my support of HB 1521 on the basis of the rigor of accredited Social Work programs. BSW and MSW students receive required CSWE course content in both micro and macro areas and BSW students complete 400 hours of supervised internships and MSW students complete 900 hours. These are the minimum hours per CSWE.

The Council on SW Education, the National Association of Social Workers, the largest membership organization of social workers, and the National Association of Black Social Workers have all taken the position that BSW and MSW graduates from accredited Social Work programs are prepared to practice Social Work.

Briefly, may I also remind you of the severe shortage of Social Work practitioners across the nation as well as in our own state; particularly in the areas of Behavioral Health, i.e. mental health and addictions. Morgan State University BSW and MSW contribute to filling vacancies locally and are often sought to fill vacancies that exist due to the shortages all over the country.

Several states have already addressed the issue of their severe shortages of Social Work practitioners by creating alternative pathways to licensure other than through the ASWB examination. On two occasions, the State of Maryland waived the examination process and grandfathered in non-test takers providing Social Work licensure.

Sincerely,

Anna McPhatter

Anna McPhatter, PhD, MSW
Founding Dean, School of Social Work
Special Assistant to the President, Community Partnerships

BSW, MSW, PhD & DSW
Health & Human Services Center Suite 500
1700 E. Cold Spring Lane Baltimore, MD 21251
Tel: 443-885-3922 • Fax: 443-885-8241