



Senate Finance Committee

March 25, 2026

Testimony for HB 1042 - Structural Racism Training- Funding Sources

Position: Support

On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers, Maryland Chapter (NASW-MD), thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1042 which is needed to clarify the intention of the General Assembly when passing HB 783 *Health Occupations - Implicit Bias and Structural Racism Training* during the 2025 legislative session. We appreciate your attention to addressing health disparities by passing the law last year and adding the topic of structural racism to the required implicit bias training that is required for all health care professionals in Maryland, including social workers.

Social workers are required to complete continuing education because the field of behavioral health evolves rapidly, and ongoing training ensures practitioners remain competent, ethical, and aligned with current best practices. Continuing education helps social workers stay updated on emerging research, treatment modalities, and legal or ethical standards, all of which protect client safety and improve therapeutic outcomes. It also supports professional growth, fosters cultural competence, and maintains public trust by ensuring that licensed social workers consistently refine their skills, examine their implicit bias, and deliver high-quality, evidence-based care.

The NASW Code of Ethics guides our position and our dedication to providing continuing education offering on implicit bias and structural racism. We believe that social workers can best train social workers on the unique ways that implicit bias and structural racism present in behavior health. HB 1042 is necessary to clarify that the Maryland Nurses Association is not the ONLY provider of the required training on implicit bias and structural racism.

On behalf of more than 2,600 social workers across Maryland, and thousands more across our regional chapters, I respectfully urge a favorable report on HB 1042. Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to addressing health disparities in health and behavioral health.

Respectfully,

Karessa Proctor, BSW, MSW

Executive Director: Maryland, Metro DC, Delaware Chapters

National Association of Social Workers