



Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work

Senate Finance Committee

March 10, 2026

Senate Bill 522 – *Workers’ Compensation – Evaluation of Permanent Impairments – Licensed Social Worker-Clinical*

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work (GWSCSW) was established in 1975 to promote and advance the specialization of clinical practice within the social work profession. Through our lobbying, education, community building, and social justice activities, we affirm our commitment to the needs of those in our profession, their clients, and the community at large. On behalf of the Maryland Legislative and Advocacy Committee of the GWSCSW, we strongly support Senate Bill 522.

The bill would amend Maryland’s workers’ compensation law to authorize qualified LCSW-Cs to perform and report evaluations of permanent impairments involving behavioral or mental disorders. This bill modernizes and clarifies the role of LCSW-Cs in evaluating mental and emotional injury in the workers’ compensation system and ensures that injured workers have access to the full range of qualified health professionals capable of providing expert assessments.

LCSW-Cs are highly trained, licensed healthcare professionals whose scope of practice includes *evaluating, diagnosing, and treating biopsychosocial conditions, mental and emotional impairments, and behavioral health disorders*. Under current law, only licensed psychologists or qualified physicians may conduct evaluations of permanent impairments involving behavioral or mental health conditions. This restricts the pool of qualified evaluators despite the critical role LCSW-Cs already play in the comprehensive assessment and treatment of these conditions. Senate Bill 522 appropriately expands Section 9-721 of the Labor and Employment Article to include LCSW-Cs who meet specified experience and credentialing requirements, ensuring they are authorized to conduct these evaluations and report their findings to the Workers’ Compensation Commission.

This bill will help address the shortage of qualified evaluators for mental and behavioral health permanent impairment determinations and ensure injured workers receive timely, expert assessments grounded in clinical expertise. For the sake of fairness, evidence-based practice, and improved outcomes for injured workers, we respectfully urge a **favorable report and passage of Senate Bill 522**.

Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work: www.gwscsw.org

Contacts: Director, Legislation & Advocacy Program: Judy Gallant, LCSW-C; email: judy.gallant@verizon.net; mobile (301) 717-1004

Legislative Consultants: Christine K. Krone and Danna L. Kauffman, Schwartz, Metz, Wise & Kauffman, PA, 20 West Street, Annapolis, MD 21401

Email: ckrone@smwpa.com; mobile (410) 940-9165 ; dkauffman@smwpa.com; mobile (410) 294-7759