



**Testimony before the Senate Finance Committee  
March 10, 2026**

**Senate Bill 522 - Workers' Compensation - Evaluation of Permanent Impairments -  
Licensed Social Worker-Clinical  
SUPPORT**

On behalf of the Maryland Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW-MD) Chapter, I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 522 - Workers' Compensation - Evaluation of Permanent Impairments - Licensed Social Worker-Clinical.

This legislation specifically addresses the role of the Licensed Certified Social Worker-Clinical (LCSW-C) in evaluating, diagnosing, and treating mental and emotional disorders, including substance use disorders and behavioral health conditions, as part of the Workers' Compensation process.

The Health Occupations Article, Title 19-101, Section (5)(ii), authorizes the LCSW-C to independently evaluate and diagnose mental health conditions and impairments, provide treatment, and serve as an expert witness in legal proceedings. Additionally, the Labor and Employment Article and COMAR Title 14, Subtitle 09, Chapter 08 acknowledge the full scope of practice of the LCSW-C, including the authority to conduct evaluations, make impairment determinations, and provide medical case management.

In Maryland, there is a shortage of qualified mental health professionals capable of conducting comprehensive evaluations and providing appropriate care for injured workers. LCSW-Cs are well-trained to address mental and emotional impairments, and their role in medical case management ensures effective collaboration with other healthcare providers. Furthermore, LCSW-Cs are recognized as healthcare providers under both state and federal statutes, and their qualifications include the authority to authorize sick leave and determine Temporary Total Disability for injured workers.

Given the critical role that LCSW-Cs play in supporting the mental health needs of injured workers, NASW-MD fully supports the inclusion of the LCSW-C in Section 9-721(c) as an expert witness, in accordance with Workers' Compensation Commission regulations.

For these reasons, we ask for your favorable report on Senate Bill 522.

Respectfully,

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