



House Health Committee

February 18, 2026

House Bill 769 – *State Board of Social Work Examiners – Conditional License to Practice Social Work – Revisions*

**POSITION: OPPOSE**

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. Clinical social workers are licensed to evaluate, diagnose and treat mental disorders and substance use and addictive disorders and are licensed as medical professionals. 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. The Maryland Legislation and Advocacy Committee of GWSCSW respectfully **opposes** House Bill 769.

House Bill 769 would require the Board of Social Work Examiners (BSWE) to create a conditional license for a holder of a Bachelor Social Work (BSW) or Master Social Work (MSW) degree who has not passed the licensing exam, which is currently required for a licensee after achieving those degrees. The social worker would need to have attained the required education and experience requirements in order to receive the conditional license. The person holding the conditional license would only be able to practice within their scope of practice and under a Board approved supervisor. They would be permitted to practice under the conditional license for a period of 12-24 months. If a holder of the conditional license does not then choose to take a national exam, or does not then pass a national exam, this bill allows the individual an alternative pathway to full licensure by completing 1,500 additional hours of supervised experience. The bill also adds new requirements for supervisors for the conditional license, which will require additional work for the BSWE.

Every other licensed mental health or behavioral health profession in Maryland requires candidates to pass a standardized exam to demonstrate safe and effective practice. Allowing social workers to bypass this safeguard could decrease respect for the work and competence of social workers, put current compensation levels at risk, erode professional standards, and compromise public protection.

House Bill 769 would create additional responsibilities for supervisors, raise questions about whether extra training would be required, and create uncertainty if a supervisor does not want to oversee a conditional license. Current BSWE regulations require supervisors to have specific competencies that are based on current information. This bill also has specific requirements, not currently in place, of the kind of educational program that the supervisor must

come through. This bill would create additional burdens for the BSWE and the supervisor, and would likely reduce the number of eligible supervisors and practical supervision sites.

Additionally, this bill would permit conditionally licensed MSWs to work under the supervision of LCSW-Cs to provide clinical treatment for mental disorders, substance use disorders and addiction. The conditionally licensed MSW could be providing clinical treatment without having had the experience provided in social work programs by clinical internships, or the educational requirements of 12 clinical social work credits, at least 6 of which must be earned in an MSW program. House Bill 769 would not require the valuable learning experience for conditionally licensed social workers. For this reason, as well as the other reasons above, we urge an unfavorable report.

**For more information:**

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