

Testimony for HB 1094
Health Insurance - Graduate-Level Clinical Interns - Required Reimbursement
March 13, 2026
Support

Thank you Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison and members of the Health Committee for addressing this important issue and recognizing the vital role and contributions of graduate social work students in Maryland. As dean of the University of Maryland, School of Social Work, I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB 1094, legislation that would ensure reimbursement for behavioral health services provided by graduate-level social work clinical interns when those services are delivered under appropriate clinical supervision, and are billed through a Licensed Certified Social Worker-Clinical (LCSW-C).

The University of Maryland School of Social Work educates the majority of social workers in Maryland and Graduate-Level Social Work Interns are highly skilled emerging professionals. During their graduate school program, they engage in rigorous coursework and field practicum experiences which provide in-depth training under the supervision of experienced social workers. In their advanced year of the MSW program students are placed in agencies throughout Maryland serving clients three full days per week, under the supervision of a licensed social worker. Reimbursing for supervised intern-provided services helps stabilize outpatient clinics, supports training sites, and expands capacity at a time when behavioral-health needs are at historic highs.

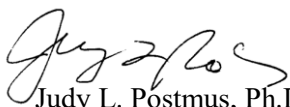
HB 1094 supports workforce development AND patient access. Maryland faces well-documented shortages of behavioral-health providers. Waitlists for therapy routinely stretch weeks to months, especially for youth, Medicaid patients, and individuals in under-resourced communities. Social work interns are an essential part of the behavioral health workforce pipeline. Coursework and practicum experiences in areas such as assessment, ethics, trauma-informed care, social work techniques, multicultural competence, and evidence-based interventions equip graduates with the skills and knowledge to provide high-quality and ethical services. HB 1094 reflects a commitment to enhancing access of clinical services while protecting public safety.

Another benefit of HB 1094 is that it will provide additional placement sites from agencies who currently do not provide these placements because of the financial disadvantage and loss when providing services without reimbursement to the agency. These interns do not function as untrained paraprofessionals. They are pre-licensed clinicians, already equipped with foundational counseling skills and theoretical knowledge, and they deliver care under the direct, ongoing supervision of licensed, experienced LCSW-Cs. This supervision includes review of clinical notes, observation of sessions, case consultations, and adherence to ethical standards of the social work profession.

Reimbursement for services delivered by supervised graduate-level social work interns is not only clinically responsible—it is necessary to maintain access to behavioral health care and support Maryland's social work workforce. This is sensible, low-risk, high-impact legislation that benefits patients, providers, and the entire behavioral health system.

I respectfully request a favorable committee report on HB 1094.

Respectfully submitted by,



Judy L. Postmus, Ph.D., ACSW, Dean & Professor

Cc: Delegate Thomas S. Hutchinson and Delegate Christopher T. Adams