

Testimony in Support of HB 7350: Related to Businesses and Professions: *Social Work Licensure Compact*
House Corporations

March 7, 2024

Dear Chairperson Solomon, Representative Caldwell, and honorable members of the House Corporations Committee:

Please support passage of HB 7350, the Social Work Licensure Compact, out of committee tonight. As a licensed independent clinical social worker having served the state through DHS, the state hospitals, and private practice, I attest to the Compact's necessity. The Compact will **increase access to services** for individuals looking for mental health care as it expands social workers' abilities to serve more communities, and it offers an incentive for individuals considering a career in social work.

As a provider, I have experienced the daunting administration time and processes of applying for other state licenses. I want to continue serving my clients through relocations due to college admittance, military change of stations, or family changes. This bill would **secure continuity of care**, which is critical during life transitions. Social workers could continue the important human connections established with their clients with the Compact.

The Compact **will not cause harm** to consumers:

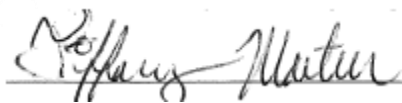
- Licensed (Independent) Clinical Social Workers would still be required to pass a national qualifying examination.
- A licensee must hold an active, unencumbered license in a home state to hold a multistate license as part of this Compact.
- State sovereignty is protected as this Compact is not creating a national license for social workers.
- Social workers would be accountable to each state's oversight department that they serve.

The Social Work Licensure Compact **addresses workforce shortages, expands consumer access to highly qualified social workers, and preserves state sovereignty**. Considering the consumer demand for telehealth, this bill will increase the supply of highly qualified social workers and provide increased work opportunities for social workers looking for career stability and growth.

I thank Representative Caldwell for introducing this bill and for her continued support of social work services for consumers and practitioners!

Standards of practice and the **Code of Ethics do not change with state borders**. Let's be among the first seven states to enact this Compact so we can continue to be national leaders of expanding social work services.

Respectfully,



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