

Submitter: Lindsey Ramsey
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2554

House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Support for HB 2554 – Social Work Licensure Compact

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice-Chair's Javadi and Nelson, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lindsey Ramsey, and I am a licensed social worker in Oregon. I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 2554, which would allow Oregon to join the Social Work Licensure Compact.

I have been practicing as a social worker in Oregon for over 7 years, and licensed for 2.5 of those years. Already an arduous process to become a social worker: graduate school, internship(s), and many hours of supervised practice. Then come the administrative hurdles to becoming licensed and being able to practice in one's state. If a social worker has to relocate, it can be an extremely time and cost prohibitive experience to obtain an additional state license. I have a friend who was licensed social worker and moved to another state, and due to administrative backlog, it took her months to get her same license designation in that state. It impacted her ability to earn an income in the meantime, which caused undue stress. The same situation can happen for any social worker who moves to Oregon.

Like many of my colleagues, I have witnessed firsthand the growing demand for social work services in our state. Burnout is at an all-time high, and we simply do not have enough social workers to meet the needs of all Oregonians. By joining the compact, we can help address this crisis by making it easier for qualified professionals to work in Oregon, reducing barriers to licensure, and expanding the social work workforce.

This bill would also provide much-needed relief for existing social workers by increasing our professional mobility. Many of us have family in other states or want the flexibility to work across state lines through telehealth. HB 2554 would streamline this process and ensure that Oregon remains a competitive and attractive place for social workers.

I strongly urge you to support this legislation so that Oregon can take a crucial step toward addressing our social work shortage and improving access to care. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lindsey Ramsey