

Submitter: Brooke Gateley Meier
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2554

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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 Brooke Gateley Meier, 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 in the field of social work for 20 years and practicing as a LCSW for the last 10 years providing individual, group, and family therapy to all sorts of populations including registered sex offenders, domestic violence survivors, teenagers struggling with eating disorders, and now in private practice I serve a variety of adults and young adults. Since 2020, providing telehealth has become a staple of my work and being able to provide more support to potential clients in surrounding states. I have had a number of long term clients have to move out of state due to job loss, family crises, and we have had to terminate relationship and find different providers in those states which has been a burden to them. It would be a huge benefit to be able to continue relationships with folks having to leave OR and to be able to provide support for other people in southern WA. Currently I have a client who drives 3 hours to cross the OR state line to meet with me in person and this has become a large financial burden on them, and this bill would benefit them directly.

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,

Brooke Gateley Meier