

Submitter: Laura Rains
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,

Hello. I am a longtime licensed social worker in Oregon writing to express my strong support for House Bill 2554, which would allow Oregon to join the Social Work Licensure Compact.

As a practicing therapist and trainer of therapists, I see the utility of this bill on a regular basis. In our state and others across the country, post-pandemic I see agencies losing social workers due to burnout while demand for services increases. Supervisors and project managers are filling in the gaps to provide front-line service delivery, increasing their workload and contributing to stress, burnout, and health injury. I have been asked to provide breakout sessions at statewide evidence-based practice (EBP) conferences to support leadership suffering burnout for just these reasons.

Locally in Oregon, in our EBP delivery, I see agencies consistently not having 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. As a practicing therapist, I am fully in support of having flexibility to

work via telehealth across state lines.

Thank you for the important work you do to support Oregonian parents, children, and families. 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 for Oregonians.

Sincerely,
Laura Rains