

Submitter: Saren Pihlaja  
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 Saren, and I am a Clinical social work associate 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 graduated from school last year and have just started my career in Social Work. I currently work at an OBGYN clinic in Astoria, OR. Being based in Astoria means that my clinic sees Oregon and Washington patients every day. Joining the compact would allow for the ability to better serve all our families.

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,  
Saren, MSW, CSWA, CADCI