

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

02/20/2025

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:

Thank you for reading my support of House Bill 2554. I'm Kerry Cannon, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) currently licensed to practice serving residents of another state. I'm writing to express my genuine support for House Bill 2554, which would allow the State of Oregon to join the Social Work Licensure Compact. Oregon is a state I would love to practice in. However, the current Oregon licensure process along with the required clinical hours, poses an ongoing barrier for myself along with several licensed California, Nevada, and Tennessee colleagues in my network who want to serve Oregonians.

The Social Work Licensure Compact, if passed, would enhance the member states' ability to protect the public's health and safety similar to what PsyPact has offered Psychiatrist's/Psychologist's across numerous states. Passing HB2554 would allow me to bring my clinical assessment and resource coordination skills, policy writing, advocacy abilities, medical knowledge, and case management experiences to Oregonians in need without unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles that have gone on far too long. This is especially important in a time post-pandemic when the demand for social work services is growing. EMTs, active military and our Veterans, Educators, our youth, Vet Techs, the unhoused, Post-Partum needs of women, and our Elders are facing difficulties obtaining adequate level mental health & wellness support within 15 days or less because of the lack of Oregon LCSWs regardless of insurance medical necessity or authorization challenges.

With that in mind, I fully support the State of Oregon's willingness and capacities to create and establish a proactive joint governmental agency. I urge the Oregon State Legislature to pass HB 2554 in order to take the steps necessary to make Oregon

more accessible to degreed Bachelor and Master's level social workers from across the country. This bill will not only benefit professionals like me engaging in roles I'm passionate about, but also further improve access to care for Oregon business owners and personnel impacted by recent funding cuts or layoffs, rural under supported Hospice agencies, and many hospitals that continue to face clinical social worker staff shortages. Thank you kindly for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kerry Cannon, BLS, LPHA, MSW, CTMHP, LCSW