

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

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

My name is Lisa Sciarani and I am a licensed clinical 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. Being apart of the Compact would reduce unnecessary administrative burden on an already overwhelming administration-heavy profession, e.g., in order to prove medical necessity and the golden thread so I can protect my income from clawbacks from insurance companies, my therapy notes for an hour long session are now 4 pages long typed! And of course, that is unpaid time. I have been licensed in NY and am currently licensed in Oregon and Washington. In NY, renewals are every three years; Oregon every two years; Washington every year. The Compact would streamline at least some aspects licensure related admin work and increase accessibility, quality, and autonomy so Oregonians can choose providers based on fit, not location.

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.

Ultimately, this would benefit Oregonians because Oregonians deserve mental health care regardless of where they are physically located. Oregonians travel and for the most part cannot receive care while in a different state. They should be able to get continuous care, even when on vacation or traveling for work, from a trusted and known provider of their choosing. It is almost impossible currently for clients to engage in family therapy with family members who reside in another state. College students often must take forced breaks when they either move to attend college or return home during breaks.

I strongly urge you to support this legislation so that Oregon can take a crucial step toward addressing our social work shortage, improving access to care, and reducing our administrative burden so we can focus on what matters, the actual treatment of our clients. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Lisa Sciarani