

AuDHaptations

C L I N I C A L T H E R A P Y L L C

February 20, 2025

House Committee on Behavioral Health Care
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301
Subject: Support for HB 2554 - Social Work Licensure Compact

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

As a licensed clinical social worker practicing in Oregon, I am writing to express my strong support for HB2554, which would allow Oregon to join the Social Work Licensure Compact.

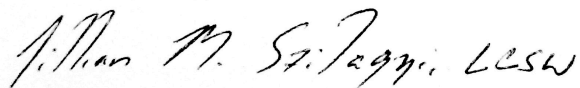
My practice, specializing in adult autism, ADHD, and Grief, has brought me a consistent waitlist of clients needing this specific mental health care. The literature strongly suggests ADHD and autism have a no small part in truancy, addiction, homelessness, and suicide. Furthermore, neurodivergent adults are likely to come part and parcel with neurodivergent children. Joining the Compact would broaden access to other clinicians specializing in neurodivergent mental health for whole families, helping Oregon better address these issues.

Given the specific work I do, the need for this specialized capacity also extends beyond Oregon. Maintaining multiple state licensures has been a barrier for me and proved a detriment to my clients. In the past I have had to maintain annual licensure in another state to volunteer as a medical social worker supporting medically fragile youth in a specialized summer camp for the few weeks I volunteered. Currently, as a clinical therapist I work for a Portland agency serving both Oregon and Washington, and I hold licensure in both states. In my role as a therapist for neurodivergent folks, I have had clients move from Oregon to states in which I am not licensed, leaving them without support as they reestablished care elsewhere, all while adjusting to a new home.

Given the shortage of qualified mental health practitioners across our country, and certainly in Oregon, joining the Compact would be a benefit not only to clients in need of general or specialized clinical support and cannot easily access it where they are, it would allow social workers across the country to support one another, such as in the context of natural disasters. Many of us struggle with burn-out. Widening the pool of supporters would benefit everyone, practitioners and clients alike.

I believe that communication and collaboration creates knowledge. I strongly urge you to support this legislation so that Oregon can take a crucial step toward addressing our own social work shortage, as well as improving access to specialized care.

Thank you for your time and consideration,



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