

Submitter: Diane Steinbrecher
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 Diane Steinbrecher, LCSW, and I am a licensed social worker in Oregon since 1988. I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 2554, which would allow Oregon to join the Social Work Licensure Compact. I have voiced my support for this bill for a many years now because of the need for consistent therapeutic relationship and support of the on-going work with clients even when they are in other states or I am outside of Oregon and clients need services. Not providing a means for this continuation of care is of critic concern.

In addition, 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. Our clients do not understand why we cannot provide services across state lines when they so desperately need it.

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. We need to join the many other states providing these compacts to provide better services and be one of the leaders in providing the best care for our clients under so many diverse situations and staying current with the mental health needs that Oregon stands by.

Sincerely,
Diane Steinbrecher, LCSW