



Senator Kari Dziedzic, Chair
State and Local Government and Veterans Committee
April 25, 2024

Chair Dziedzic and State and Local Government and Veterans Committee Members,

On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers, MN Chapter (NASW-MN) and the MN Coalition of Licensed Social Workers (Coalition), we are writing to support SF2394 and SF4570. Specifically, we support an interstate compact for social workers and expanding the provisional licensing pathway for social workers.

NASW-MN is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in our state and the Coalition includes the MN Association of Black Social Workers, the MN Hmong Social Workers' Coalition, the MN Nursing Home Social Workers Association, the MN School Social Workers Association, and the MN Society for Clinical Social Work. Collectively we represent over 3,000 social workers.

SF4570

Our members believe that social workers make important contributions to the workforce in many different settings, and we need more of them. Right now, the only licensure path open to most graduates includes passing an exam.

In MN there is another pathway to become licensed through additional supervision instead of passing the exam, but that is currently only open to a small group of people. We want to expand eligibility for this provisional pathway to all social work graduates. Because there are MN social workers who already entered the profession through provisional licensing, we know this is effective in developing competent social workers.

Article 6 in SF4570 allows new social work graduates some flexibility to choose a licensing path that best matches their professional needs and goals so they can join the workforce.

SF2394

Currently social workers must maintain a separate license for each state they wish to practice. Requirements include taking multiple exams and managing extra continuing education hours, a burdensome expense for social workers.

Despite the time and expense required to maintain multiple licenses, many social workers currently do this for many reasons. For example, social workers who live near the border have found that it eases complications in the referral process for patients who cross state lines for services. Others, especially social workers with a clinical license, use multiple licenses so they can offer telehealth services more broadly and more specifically, continue the care for their clients who are relocating either temporarily or permanently.

This bill makes it easier for social workers to offer services, and it allows clients to access those services without increasing the risk to the public. States participating in the compact must meet the licensing standards established in the compact, and out-of-state social workers practicing in MN are subject to the licensing authority of the MN Board of Social Work.

We appreciate your consideration of these issues.

Sincerely, Coalition of Licensed Social Workers Representatives:

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Renita Wilson, MSW, LICSW, MN Association of Black Social Workers

Kao Nou Moua, PhD, MSW, LGSW, MN Hmong Social Workers' Coalition,

Joanna Genovese-Cairns, MSW, LISW, MN Nursing Home Social Workers Association

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