



February 19, 2024

To whom it may concern:

My name is Kao Nou Moua, and I am writing this letter on behalf of the Minnesota Hmong Social Workers' Coalition in support of HF3963/SF3880. I am a co-founder of the Hmong Social Workers' Coalition, and was selected to represent our group's interests as a member of the Minnesota Coalition of Licensed Social Workers. The Hmong Social Workers' Coalition has been working with the Minnesota Coalition of Licensed Social Workers since last spring to coordinate efforts to reduce barriers to social work licensure.

In addition to working with the Minnesota Coalition of Licensed Social Workers, our group has sent members to provide public testimony during Board of Social Work (BOSW) meetings, and we have representatives from our group who are members of the BOSW Advisory Board. In all of our advocacy efforts, the Hmong Social Workers' Coalition has had one position: to reduce barriers to social work licensure and professional practice.

The Hmong Social Workers' Coalition believes that expanding the provisional social work license, which includes eliminating the exam and removing the requirements of foreign-born and English language as a second language, will make social work licensure more accessible to Hmong social workers in Minnesota. Our group believes HF3963/SF3880 is the only bill that achieves this effort to reduce barriers for Hmong social workers.

We know there is another bill, supported by the BOSW, that would expand the provisional license. However, this bill would also add additional requirements, namely more supervision hours. The Hmong Social Workers' Coalition does not support this bill that adds more supervision hours because there is no evidence to support that increasing supervision hours makes a social worker more competent.

Additionally, adding more supervision hours creates another barrier. Under the bill supported by the BOSW, social workers would have to prolong their supervised practice with the provisional license and pay for additional supervision. The Hmong Social Workers' Coalition wants a true alternative path to licensure that reduces overall barriers. In fact, it was Hmong social workers, who advocated many years ago for an alternative pathway to licensure; it was through this advocacy that the provisional license was developed.

The Minnesota Hmong Social Workers' continues the efforts that early Hmong social workers worked hard to achieve. We believe in and support efforts to reduce barriers. We



support HF3963/SF3880 because it addresses the needs of Hmong social workers in Minnesota.

We hope the BOSW will continue to work with professional social work organizations like the Minnesota Coalition of Licensed Social Workers and the Minnesota Hmong Social Workers' Coalition to bring broader reforms to licensing. We know these efforts will make it more accessible to Hmong individuals who are pursuing careers in social work and create a workforce that reflects the diversity of our state.

Please feel free to contact me with additional questions at 651-315-4543 or mouakao@augsborg.edu.

Sincerely,

Kao Nou L. Moua, PhD, LGSW
Assistant Professor, Social Work Department, Augsburg University
Co-Founder, Minnesota Hmong Social Workers' Coalition