



Senator Melissa Wiklund, Chair
Health and Human Services Finance Committee
April 3, 2024

Chair Wiklund and Health and Human Services 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 SF4570 and specifically Article 6, expanding the provisional licensing pathway for social workers.

We also appreciate the broad support from this committee on the social work interstate compact. Though we recognize that this bill remains in the Judiciary committee and therefore, cannot be included in this omnibus bill, we urge you to work with your colleagues to find a path for this important issue.

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.

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. Yet, it's been shown that this exam is not fair for everyone.

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 HF4247 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.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Coalition of Licensed Social Workers Representatives:

Karen Goodenough, PhD, LGSW, National Association of Social Workers, MN Chapter

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

Julie Campanelli, LICSW, Ed.S, MN School Social Workers Association

James Stoltz, LICSW, LADC, MN Society for Clinical Social Work