



Senator Ron Latz, Chair
Judiciary and Public Safety Committee
March 27, 2024

Chair Latz and Judiciary and Public Safety 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 in support of SF4076, a bill that will allow MN to join the social work licensure compact.

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. Should this bill pass, social workers from around the state and in many settings will utilize the benefits a compact can offer.

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. For example, the cost to take the Association of Social Work Board exam is \$230-260 each time, and social workers report 40 hours of continuing education in each license renewal cycle to the MN Board of Social Work alone.

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 this issue.

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
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