



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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February 6, 2024

Testimony of Rep. Amy D. Kuhn in support of

LD 2140, An Act to Enact the Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact

Senator Bailey, Representative Perry, esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services, my name is Amy Kuhn and I proudly represent the residents of House District 111 in the Town of Falmouth. I am pleased to join you today to speak in support of LD 2140, An Act to Enact the Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact, which would help eliminate barriers to practice for social workers and increase access to care for clients.

The Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact would eliminate the necessity for qualified social workers to maintain licenses in multiple states by providing for the mutual recognition of other member state licenses.

This proposal offers a number of benefits, including making it easier for qualified social workers to relocate to Maine or practice across state lines, and providing greater continuity of care for clients who travel or relocate, including a number of specific populations such as military families, college students, and snowbirds. Today, when telehealth and remote work are increasingly common for both providers and clients, the Compact would help align Maine's licensing standards with the realities of social work practice today and the evolving needs of clients.

Importantly, the Compact seeks to assure public safety by establishing common standards for licensure, ensuring that social work professionals meet consistent and high-quality criteria across participating states. These requirements promote the delivery of standardized and effective social work services and would serve to create a comprehensive data set about licensees, which would facilitate meaningful oversight.

My understanding is that Maine already participates in compacts for other health care specialties — for psychologists, nurses, and physicians, for example. It is time that we add social workers to that list. Post Covid, our mental health workforce is reduced, and yet the need for services

appears ever higher. Long waitlists for services are common. We have an opportunity now to help expand this critical workforce.

I urge you to vote *Ought to Pass* on LD 2140 and bring increased access to mental health services to Maine people.

Thank you.