

Lou Mansolillo

From: Mandy LeComte <mandy.lecomte.licsw@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 4, 2024 7:15 PM
To: House Corporations Committee
Subject: Bill # H7350/ S2184: Interstate Compact for Social Work - *NEW* (Rep. Caldwell & Sen. DiMario):

Dear Chairperson:

I am writing today as a resident of Rhode Island, a social worker, and a member of the National Association of Social Workers Rhode Island Chapter (NASW-RI). I am asking you to support the passage of the Social Work Interstate Compact legislation Bill # H7350/ S2184.

I have been a social worker for the last 20 years and 2 years ago I started my own private practice. I love what I do and most days it doesn't even feel like a job.

One of my biggest struggles is not being licensed in all 50 states. In the last 2 years I have had to terminate with 8 people who moved to a state (Texas, Washington, Minnesota, New Jersey, DC, Ohio, to name a few) that I am not licensed in. When my clients move to another state, travel for business / military, are college students here in RI from out of state; I have to terminate services and they have to start over with a new clinician or put a pause on service until they are back in Rhode Island.

With the technology we have and are able to utilize there should be no reason why clients can't continue therapeutic services because they are physically not in the state of Rhode Island.

Please help!!

The Social Work Interstate Compact aims to increase public access to social work services, tackle workforce shortages, provide licensees with opportunities for multistate practice, and contribute to a more robust social work workforce. By allowing reciprocity across state lines, the bill seeks to create licensure mobility for social workers, retaining talent within our state and ensuring continuity of care when clients travel or relocate. Additionally, the bill supports expanding telehealth technologies, further enhancing public protection abilities, and adapting to the evolving healthcare landscape.

Passing this legislation this year could position Rhode Island as one of the first seven states to join the compact, actively participating in shaping the rules and regulations at the national level. The compact would decrease interruptions in services, improve access to mental health services, and bridge the treatment gap where a significant portion of individuals with mental illnesses in Rhode Island currently go untreated. Your support for this legislation is crucial in advancing the well-being of our community and addressing the challenges faced by social workers and those in need of their services. I kindly urge you to champion the cause of the Social Work Interstate Compact and actively contribute to its passage.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Mandy LeComte, LICSW
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