



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

**State Board of Licensed Social Workers**

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## TESTIMONY – HB 2473

The Oregon Board of Licensed Social Workers is a health regulatory agency authorized to license and monitor individuals who practice social work in Oregon. With its focus on consumer protection, the BLSW ensures that Oregon social workers have met educational and experiential requirements and practice within the legal and ethical guidelines established in statute and by the board in rule.

License requirements for clinical social workers include a proscribed time period where applicants work in a professional setting under the direction of an experienced, licensed social worker. This plan of supervision is a prerequisite for obtaining the Clinical Social Worker Associate (CSWA) certificate.

In practice an individual will complete his or her Masters of Social Work degree and then apply with the BLSW for their CSWA, which begins the process to obtain full clinical licensure, the Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) license. To receive the CSWA, an applicant must submit for approval a plan of supervision that identifies the work setting, the supervisor and the schedule for supervision meetings.

CSWA applicants as well as staff from the schools of social work have characterized the BLSW process for developing a plan of supervision as a “Catch-22.” CSWA applicants cannot develop plan of supervision without having a job, and cannot get a job without having a professional license, the CSWA. This procedural feedback loop creates an obstacle for CSWA applicants, unnecessarily complicating and extending the process.

Under existing statute, the BLSW does not have the authority to issue licenses other than the four listed in statute, the Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), Clinical Social Work Associate (CSWA), the Licensed Masters Social Worker (LMSW) and the Registered Baccalaureate Social Worker (RBSW).

HB 2473 would authorize the board to adopt rules and issue temporary licenses within each of the four categories. With this authority, the BLSW could develop criteria by rule to issue a temporary CSWA. This would allow an applicant to obtain employment and then work with their employer to develop a plan of supervision, leading to the LCSW.

The proposed language of HB 2473 is flexible enough to allow the board to address other, similar situations as they may arise.

The Board of Licensed Social Workers believes that enacting HB 2473 would allow the board to carry out its regulatory function more efficiently and effectively, and eliminate what is now an obstacle to professional licensure.

The A-engrossed version of the bill includes an emergency clause, which would allow the BLSW to implement to bill and offer current year MSW graduates a more streamlined license process.

If you have questions regarding the Board and its mission or the bill, please do not hesitate to contact Randy Harnisch at [randy.harnisch@state.or.us](mailto:randy.harnisch@state.or.us) or by telephone at (503) 508-0636.