

February 13, 2024

**Testimony in support of HB 4071**

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice-Chair's Goodwin and Nelson, Members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care:

My name is Kourtney Linebaugh. I live in Salem, Oregon. My district representatives are Senator Thatcher and Representative Mannix. I am a current graduate student in the School of Social Work at Portland State University. I write today to encourage you to **support the -2 Amendments to HB 4071, which would enact the Social Work Licensing Compact.**

I am passionate about the social work licensing compact because it supports the workforce, reduces barriers for people to access behavioral health and mental health care, and provides a more holistically connected approach to our mental health system through interstate collaboration.

The compact supports our workforce by reducing barriers for social workers, and by recognizing valid social work licenses issued by other member states. The compact eliminates barriers to practice and to client care along with ensuring public protection.

Social workers are the lifeblood of the behavioral health workforce. Social workers are omnipresent throughout our society, including in the government, schools, universities, social service agencies, communities, the military, health care, and mental health organizations. This compact shows Oregon's commitment to supporting mental health and behavioral health through a multistate solution.

Again, please **support the -2 Amendments to HB 4071, which would enact the Social Work Licensing Compact, which will lessen the behavioral health workforce shortage in Oregon.**

Sincerely,

Kourtney Linebaugh

Portland State University, MSW Graduate Student (Expected June 2025)