



Northwest Kidney Council  
438 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Lake Oswego, OR 97034

Oregon House Committee on Behavioral Health & Health Care  
**RE: Support for HB 2554**

Feb. 13, 2025

Chair Nosse, members of the committee,

On behalf of the Northwest Kidney Council, thank you for the opportunity to provide comment in support of HB 2554. Our association partners with patient advocates, health care professionals, care providers, and researchers to advance kidney care in both Washington and Oregon. Together, we are committed to ensuring that all patients with kidney disease receive high-quality care and that treatment is accessible to all.

This bill will make it easier for licensed social workers to practice across state lines. Kidney patients face complex medical and social challenges, and access to skilled social workers is critical to ensuring they receive the support they need. By establishing some flexibility for this workforce, Oregon can reduce unnecessary barriers to licensure and help expand the pool of qualified social workers available to serve our state's kidney patients.

For individuals living with kidney disease, social workers play an essential role in navigating treatment options, coordinating dialysis care, and addressing financial and emotional burdens. Many patients, particularly those in rural areas, struggle to find social workers who understand the complexities of chronic kidney disease and dialysis care. HB 2554 will allow more social workers to provide services across state lines, improving access to specialized support for kidney patients who need it most.

This is particularly important at a time when the healthcare system faces workforce shortages. The ability to recruit and retain qualified social workers without unnecessary licensing hurdles will ensure that kidney patients continue to receive the advocacy, counseling, and case management they rely on.

HB 2554 is a commonsense solution that will help Oregon address workforce shortages and improve access to critical social work services for kidney patients and others in need.

The Northwest Kidney Council urges your support for this bill to ensure that all Oregonians living with kidney disease have the social work support necessary to navigate their healthcare journey. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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