

Submitter: Rachel Garcia
On Behalf Of: Medical Social Workers
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4083

Hello,

I have been a practicing social worker for almost 16 years. I have my Licensed Clinical Social Worker License. I am writing to oppose this legislation on the basis that while every social worker could choose to go into mental health, there are numerous other pathways to provide care to people in our communities that is not specific to mental health. I personally practice in community palliative care. Medicare and Medicaid rules and regulations are both very clear on the education and license needed to practice social work in a health care setting. One example would be hospice and home health. Medicare and Medicaid require that each agency have at least have a social worker on staff to provide medical social work to patients receiving hospice services and home health. There is no way a supervisor who does not have an LCSW and who is not familiar with the rules and regulations in healthcare would be able to supervise someone not in the medical field. I'm not seeing anything in the legislation to differentiate between mental health and other social work practices. Social Work as a whole has a broad scope of practice and that can't be lumped in to only include mental health.

The current Oregon Board of Social Workers does an excellent job of maintaining standards and supervision as it related to social work and includes the varied scopes of practice. This legislation shows poor insight into the actual work of social workers. I'd also be curious if it is in alignment with national standards in terms of health care.

I oppose this legislation. Thank you.