



Counselor, Social Worker & Marriage and Family Therapist Board

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Budget Testimony before the House Finance Subcommittee on State Government & Agency Review

March 8, 2017

Chairman Faber, Ranking Member Patterson, and Members of the House Finance Subcommittee on State Government & Agency Review, I'm Brian Carnahan, Executive Director of the Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board.

Thank you on behalf of the Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board (CSWMFT Board) for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony and address any questions that you may have.

Overview of Board:

The mission of the CSWMFT Board is to protect the citizens of the State of Ohio from unqualified and incompetent Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists. The Board accomplishes this mission through the establishment of requirements for minimal competency for entry into three separate but related licensed professions. The Board has the statutory authority to grant licenses and registrations for Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists, and oversees the administration of professional examinations through vendor partners. The Board also has the responsibility for establishing and enforcing practice standards and codes of conduct for all three professions. To ensure appropriate continuing competence, the Board pre-approves continuing education programs and providers necessary for meeting continuing education requirements.

There are currently over 37,000 licensed and registered individuals including: over 17,000 Licensed Social Workers, 8,605 Licensed Independent Social Workers, 5,237 Licensed

Professional Counselors, 5,692 Licensed Professional Clinical Counselors, 243 Independent Marriage and Family Therapists and 204 Marriage and Family Therapists with active licenses. The Board has 480 individuals actively registered as Social Work Assistants. Over 500 individuals are registered as Social Worker Trainees and over 600 individuals registered as Counselor Trainees, who are master's program students working towards licensure as social workers and professional counselors. Presently there are approximately 2600 pending applications. These are applications awaiting critical documents such as exam scores, transcripts, or background checks.

The Board has a staff of 13 full time employees, which includes an Executive Director, a Deputy Director, two Investigators, an Administrative Assistant, five Application Coordinators, who process new applications, a Renewal Coordinator, an Audit Coordinator, and a customer service staff member who responds to a substantial number of phone and e-mail inquiries while processing mail and other tasks. As noted in my responses to the supplemental questions, several staff take on additional duties, such as maintaining our web site, processing entering documents into our document management system, or tracking our payroll and finances. My colleagues manage the licensing process for all three professions; Board investigators investigate complaints that arise out of all three professions; the renewal coordinator is responsible for the renewal of licenses for all three professions, while the remaining staff work with all three professions. CSWMFT Board staff are fully engaged in pursuing the mission of the Board.

Recommended Budget:

The Board is self-sufficient. The Board's revenues result from licensing and renewal fees. The Board does not receive any general revenue funds (GRF). The Board has not raised fees since the inception of the Board. Owing to increasing IT, rent, denial and disciplinary hearings, and other operating costs, in July 2016, the Board approved a fee increase for license application and renewal, as well as increases in the application fees for continuing education provider approvals. Owing to legislative proposals regarding the Board's configuration, and in an effort to align rule-filings, the Board has yet to start the formal rule-filing process to increase the application, renewal, and continuing education fees.

Without a fee increase, a conservative projection indicates revenue will be \$812,729 in the seven months of fiscal year 2018 covered by the executive budget request. Projected revenue, without the proposed increase in fees the Board can file via the rule-making process, will be approximately \$121,500 less than anticipated expenditures.

We believe the Board can meet its obligations for the first seven months with the planned fee increase, along with careful management of resources. As of January 21, 2018, the CSWMFT Board will be consolidated along with the Chemical Dependency Professionals Board and the Board of Psychology in to the newly created State Behavioral Health and Social Work Board Behavioral Health and Social Work Board, at which time the boards will combine operations.

The Executive Budget Recommendation will:

- Fund the operations of the Board with the goal of protection of the public;
- Fund three professional standards committees and staff for licensing counselors, social workers and marriage and family therapists;
- Allow for the processing of over 1500 new license applications, 7500 license renewal applications, 800 continuing education program applications, and 150 continuing education provider applications and renewals which we can anticipate to occur during the first half of FY 2018;
- Support the investigation of over 150 complaints;
- Fund tracking of over 1500 licensing examination requests and results, over 1500 transcripts, 1500 criminal records checks and over 2000 supervision documents per fiscal year;

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I look forward to addressing your questions regarding the Board's critical public protection role.