

My name is Nancy Fingerhood and I am a social work student in graduate school. Thank you for accepting my written testimony. I urge you to adopt Senator Antonio's amendment to remove the section of the bill that allows related degrees to be a licensed social worker. If HB 509 is passed without the amendment, the public could no longer trust that a "licensed social worker" is actually someone with a degree in social work. This is a public safety issue.

If the amendment is not passed, there will be grave concern for the impact on the future interstate compact. Ohio will want to enter the compact when it is ready but if this legislation passes Ohio would likely be unable to join as we would not meet the base requirements. To my knowledge there are no other states that allow a related degree to become licensed as a social worker, putting us out of compliance with the model regulation standards.

Again, please adopt Senator Antonio's amendment. Thank you for your time.