



Ohio Counselor, Social Worker & Marriage and Family Therapist Board

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Representative Sara Carruthers, Chair
Behavioral Health and Recovery Supports Committee
Ohio House of Representative
77 South High Street
13th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Senate Bill 204 (Counseling Compact)

Dear Representative Carruthers:

I write on behalf of the State of Ohio CSWMFT Board to express its support for Senate Bill 204. The COVID pandemic accelerated a growing trend of licensed professionals seeking to offer their services where care is needed, regardless of jurisdiction. Through its temporary permission to practice and endorsement rules the Board has attempted to facilitate licensure for Counselors moving to Ohio or for those counselors who have clients moving to Ohio. However, these measures are limited in scope and effectiveness. The Counselor Compact will support appropriate public protection, allow Ohio Counselors an opportunity to provide services in other states, and ensure Ohioans can get help from Counselors licensed in Compact member states. The Compact will eliminate burdens for Counselors, without creating an unnecessary administrative burden for the Board.

As Senator Roegner noted in her recent sponsor's testimony, Ohio was represented in the drafting of the proposed Compact. Former CSWMFT Board Member Ryan Pickut, LPCC-S, participated as a subject matter expert. This ensured the needs and concerns of Ohioans were represented in the process.

The Board Members and staff of the CSWMFT Board look forward to the opportunity to implement the Compact. We would encourage prompt consideration of this legislation as the first ten states that pass the Compact will be part of drafting the rules implementing the Compact. This is critical to ensuring the Compact meets the needs of Ohio.

Sincerely,

Brian P. Carnahan
Executive Director