

December 6, 2022

The Ohio Senate

Workforce & Higher Education Committee

Verbal Testimony Re: HB 509, line 12858 regarding social work title protection

Good Morning Chairman Johnson, vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Martin, and honorable committee members. I appreciate your attention and passion for Ohio citizens. My name is Gabriella Schnaidt, I am a current licensed social worker. I am also enrolled in the College of Social Work at Ohio State University, where I will be graduating with my Masters in Social Work this spring. I practice in schools located in Franklin County and Fairfield County, with students in kindergarten through seniors in high school. These students come from traditional families, single-parent households, foster care, and kinship care. The majority of them have complex trauma which is why school counselors have referred them for services.

I so appreciate how a majority of you have worked tirelessly to promote workforce development, whether that be through programs at Kent state, or by ensuring licensure reflexivity and making sure all trained professionals have satisfied the minimum education, training, or experience. I implore you today to make similar strides through ensuring that licensed social workers in Ohio are held to similar standards. That they continue to have the essential training and skill set required to complete the job of an LSW, as well as secure the partnerships across states are maintained. I truly believe that Senator Antonio's amendment will maintain the integrity of my profession and ultimately guarantee that Ohio citizens are receiving accurate, effective, and the skilled care that they deserve. Those working on a bachelor's in social work are required to have at least 400 hours of an internship with direct care for clients, I myself had a little over 425 hours. For my masters I am doing 24 hours' worth of an internship weekly over the course of 28 weeks, totaling 672 hours. Social Work students also receive extensive training in assessment, human development, engagement, resource acquisition, and interventions for individuals, groups, and communities that all related fields are missing.

Currently LSWs are able to diagnosis and provide therapy to clients, with supervision. That supervision practically looks like 1 hour for every 20 hours, but often is about 1 hour per week. A professional with no experience in family dynamics, diagnosing, resource acquisition is unable to provide quality care to individuals, groups, and communities with this minute amount of oversight.

Therefore, I urge you to support this amendment so that LSWs will continue to have the necessary skill, training, and direct experience with clients to fulfill the duties of a social worker. I appreciate your drive to serve the public and ask that you pass this amendment to ensure that your constituents secure the caliber of service and expertise they deserve. Thank you for your time and considering my request.