



Maryland
Hospital Association

February 12, 2024

To: The Honorable Pamela Beidle, Chair, Senate Finance Committee

Re: Letter of Support- Senate Bill 204- Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact

Dear Chair Beidle:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 62 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 204.

Maryland hospitals are facing the most critical staffing shortage in recent memory. MHA's [2022 State of Maryland's Health Care Workforce report](#) outlines a roadmap to ensure Maryland has the health care workforce it needs now and into the future. This includes recommendations, like the Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact, that would strengthen the hospital workforce and increase access to care.

Hospitals employ social workers to support behavioral health patients and other vulnerable populations through case management, care coordination, and much more. Patients who face barriers transitioning out of the hospital to the next level of care, home or somewhere else, often rely on social workers to support them during this process. Pediatric patients experiencing hospital overstays rely on social workers to advocate for resources and support. As such, social workers provide invaluable behavioral health care in their communities, as well as counsel and support to families whose loved ones are receiving health care services.

Almost half of the states have pending legislation to join the Social Work Licensure Compact.¹ Given the critical workforce shortage, Maryland's participation in this compact to allow for interstate reciprocity would alleviate the strain on our current workforce and help build a future pipeline.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report on SB 204.

For more information, please contact:

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¹ <https://swcompact.org/compact-map/>