

House Bill 345
Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact
Health and Government Operations
January 23, 2025
Support

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee,

Catholic Charities of Baltimore supports HB 345, which would make Maryland a participant in the Social Work Licensure Compact. This would allow social workers with multistate licenses to practice in Maryland and other member states.

For a century, Catholic Charities has provided care and services to improve the lives of Marylanders in need. We accompany Marylanders as they age with dignity, support their pursuit of employment and career advancement, heal from trauma and addiction, achieve economic independence, prepare for educational success, and welcome immigrant neighbors into Maryland communities. As Maryland's second largest human service provider, we are deeply committed to helping those who need it most. And we cannot do this work without dedicated social workers on our staff.

Here is why we support HB 345:

1. Expanding the Pool of Social Workers:

There is a severe shortage of social workers in the non-profit community. By participating in the Social Work Licensure Compact, we would have access to a broader pool of qualified social workers from across member states. This is particularly important given the growing demand for social services in Maryland. With this compact, Catholic Charities could more easily recruit skilled social workers who already hold multistate licenses, helping us meet the increasing needs of the communities we serve, particularly in rural or underserved areas where qualified social workers are scarce.

2. Increasing and/or Expanding Work Opportunities for Marylanders:

HB 345 would potentially expand work opportunities for Maryland residents. Social workers in Maryland who hold a compact license would have the flexibility to provide services in other participating states, allowing them to meet the needs of clients across state lines. This aligns directly with our pillar of **empowering careers**—giving Maryland social workers greater opportunities for professional mobility and growth while continuing to meet the needs of the communities they serve.

By supporting HB 345, we are not only advocating for a more robust and adaptable workforce but also ensuring that those we serve, especially the most vulnerable, continue to receive the high-quality care and support they deserve.

For these reasons, Catholic Charities of Baltimore respectfully urges the committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 268.

Submitted By: Madelin Martinez, Assistant Director of Advocacy