



**Testimony on HB 1035**  
**National Association of Social Workers – North Dakota Chapter**  
**ND House Human Services Committee**  
**January 7, 2025**

Chairman Ruby and members of the House Human Services Committee:

My name is Elizabeth Loos and I am here on behalf of the North Dakota Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW-ND) to request a do-pass vote on HB 1035, the Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact.

NASW has welcomed the release of the compact. At the time of this writing, 22 states have passed the compact including South Dakota and Minnesota.

The social work licensure compact would provide social workers with licensure mobility in compact states. Currently, social workers must seek a separate license in each state in which they wish to practice, which can be labor- and time-intensive—especially for military social workers. A compact creates a more efficient processing system, while also protecting public safety.

Notably, the Department of Defense invested in the social work compact in an effort to support military families. Military families are known to be highly mobile due to frequent duty station re-assignments. This level of mobility creates barriers to employment and career development for military spouses and licensed professionals. The Compact allows active-duty military personnel or their spouse to designate a Home State for primary licensure and keep that designation as long as the service member is on active duty, ensuring that the service member or their spouse can continue to work with their current compact license regardless of duty station re-assignments during their term of service.

The existing process for obtaining licensure across multiple states is cumbersome, costly, time-consuming, and can result in unnecessary gaps in clinical care. Current state licensure laws prohibit social workers from continuing care with clients who are mobile for work or who move out of state during the course of treatment, forcing providers to terminate care with these clients regardless of their need.

The Compact has the ability to eliminate barriers to practice and can increase access to care, especially in areas that are underserved, geographically isolated or lack specialty care. It does this by increasing the efficiency of becoming licensed across state lines.

Much like the existing licensure compacts, the social work licensure compact will benefit clients and the social work profession by:

- Ensuring continuity of care when clients or social workers relocate or travel
- Increasing access to care for clients

- Modernizing data sharing between states which utilize public protections for vulnerable clients
- Simplifying current interstate licensure processes
- Enhancing mobility for social workers who meet uniform requirements
- Allowing military personnel and spouses to maintain licensure when relocating

The social work licensure compact is a long-term solution to the issue of licensure portability, practice across state lines, and access shortages in behavioral health.

NASW-ND urges you to vote do-pass on HB 1035.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth Loos, Lobbyist  
NASW North Dakota