

Proponent In-Person Testimony HB 2340
Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare

March 20, 2023

Chair Gossage and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lesa Kinsey-Patterson. I am grateful for the opportunity to speak with you today in support of House Bill 2340. I received a masters in social work from the University of Kansas in 2009.

As you are aware, Kansas has a workforce shortage in mental health and substance use disorder treatment. The provisions in this bill will reduce barriers to licensing in Kansas for social workers.

The amendments brought forth in the House Health and Human Services Committee will encourage social work graduates like me to seek licensure in Kansas. Likewise, I know LMSW level social workers who practice in Missouri due to all to obstacles to become clinically licensed in Kansas

In 2003, Kansas added additional regulatory burdens which required an additional 15 hours of course work that is above and beyond graduating from an accredited social work program. Now BSRB administrators spend hours taking a fine-tooth comb through a Licensed Master Social Worker accredited program course work syllabus.

This is not the standard for licensing Boards across the nation. If a Licensed Master Social Worker, no longer has their syllabus from each of their courses (such as I) then they will be subjected to taking additional classes. I threw away my syllabuses years ago. Also, at 57, I do not desire to take more classes. This does not happen in any of our neighboring states. Thus, many LMSWs chose to practice in neighboring states versus the expense of going back to college to meet a regulatory burden not needed in states across the country.

The Bill includes several other provisions that I support that will expand workforce and training of social workers in Kansas including:

- Reducing reciprocity for LBSW/LMSW to 12 months
- Adding diagnostic impressions as type of professional experience for a practicum for specialist clinical social workers; and
- Removing the additional burden of becoming a BSRB approved supervisor to supervise clinical social workers.

I would like to become clinically licensed, and House Bill 2340 would remove the many obstacles to create a pathway for me to become licensed in Kansas.

Sincerely,

Lesla Patterson-Kinsey, MSW
Prairie Village, KS