

November 19, 2019

Legislative Council
Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta ME 04333

Re: *LR 2968: An Act to Maintain and Enhance the Behavioral Health Workforce in Maine*

Dear President Jackson, Speaker Gideon and Members of the Legislative Council,

On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers Maine Chapter, I am writing to express opposition to LR 2968.

It is our understanding that this bill would allow for Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors (LCPC) to supervise Licensed Master Social Workers - Conditional (Clinical) (LMSW-CC). This supervision takes place for two years as the social worker is pursuing their clinical license. Once the social worker has their LCSW, their clinical license, the social worker can see clients without on-going supervision or consultation.

We have tremendous respect for LCPCs and other allied professionals addressing the mental and behavioral health needs of our communities. We take no issue with those of other disciplines supervising social workers in the workplace. However, during the two years a social worker is working towards their LCSW, the NASW and the Association of Social Work Boards' (ASWB) Best Practice Standards in Social Work Supervision states that "supervision and consultation regarding specific social work practice (should) be provided by another social worker." Supervision is key in providing LCSW candidates with essential competence for effective and safe practice and needed professional knowledge in passing the Licensure Exam, which is highly based on social work skills and practice.

Consumer protection is enriched when LCSW candidates adhere to the basic foundational principles of the profession's approach to working with clients. Clinical social work is based upon a systemic perspective of the person in environment, with attention focused on ways in which social and economic injustices, discrimination and aspects of the individual's environment affect the client. Unlike other mental health disciplines, clinical social workers' diagnoses and treatment are based upon this perspective. The person in environment approach is essential to social work practice and must be encouraged during the social worker's clinical supervision.

For these reasons we urge you to vote against the introduction of LR 2968. If you have any questions or would like further information, please do not hesitate to call me at 603.496.0994 or email me at lstanley.naswme@socialworkers.org.

Respectfully submitted,

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