

SB 530 SUMMARY & TALKING POINTS



Sen. Thomas H. Killion

SB 530

Senator Thomas Killion is the primary sponsor for SB 530. Below you will find a summary of the bill and some talking points.

Practice Protection for Clinical Social Workers:

Individuals who lose their social work licenses in other states may come to Pennsylvania and provide unlicensed services. Practice protection seeks to limit the delivery of licensed clinical social work services to individuals credentialed to provide such services. NASW-PA believes practice protection would protect the public by ensuring that individuals who are providing mental health services in private practice are licensed to do so.

Brief Bill Analysis

- Practice protection will mandate clinical licensure for MSWs who practice independently, which 48 states already require. This will protect client populations by holding social workers who violate practice standards or operate outside of the NASW Code of Ethics.
- In addition, it will add "diagnosis" to the scope of practice for LCSWs, which 45 other states already have in place.
- Even though insurance companies do presently accept diagnostic codes from LCSWs for services rendered, it is critical that diagnosis be added to the scope of practice for LCSWs so clinical social workers can continue to utilize this professional privilege.

NASW-PA Talking Points:

1. Since Pennsylvania does not have practice protection, anyone can legally deliver clinical social work services. A licensed workforce would provide better outcomes for consumers.
2. Creation of practice protection for clinical social workers would ensure that providers meet competency standards and adhere to ethical practice. Practice protection would ensure that social workers are held accountable for their practice.
3. The State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists, and Professional Counselors, is the only regulated board that does not have legal practice protection in place.
4. Every state surrounding Pennsylvania allows licensed clinical social workers to diagnose clients, putting Pennsylvania at a competitive disadvantage in terms of our workforce and the services they can provide to their clients.