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## **Assemblymembers Yamada and Eggman Introduce Social Work Title Protection Bill**

*Protects public by ensuring those classified as social workers meet educational standards*

SACRAMENTO – Assemblymember Mariko Yamada (D-Davis) and Assemblymember Susan Eggman (D-Stockton) introduced AB 252 today to ensure that individuals who are classified as social workers have earned a degree in social work at an accredited college or university.

“Social work is both a calling and a profession,” Yamada said. “The title ‘social worker’ presumes a high standard of education, a solid grounding in professional ethics, and rigorous real-world training. A consumer has the right to assume that a person with the title meets a high standard of competency and integrity, which cannot be guaranteed when services are provided without a social work degree.”

Employers use the title “social worker” inconsistently to describe many types of workers with varying experience and training. This misrepresentation can be harmful to vulnerable citizens who believe they are receiving care and services delivered by a qualified social worker who can use his or her professional judgment in life-threatening situations, including protecting the elderly from abuse and neglect and intervening in situations posing a serious danger to children.

“The title ‘social worker’ invokes the shared history, training, ethics and practices of a 115-year-old profession,” said Assemblymember Eggman. “We need to ensure that anyone who uses the title meets those well-established standards. This is about truth in advertising.”

AB 252 will require employers to assign the title of “social worker” only to individuals who hold a degree in social work from a school accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Individuals will be prohibited from identifying as a social worker without the appropriate educational qualifications.

CSWE accreditation ensures that all who graduate with a social work degree have had coursework grounded in professional ethics, best practices and cultural diversity supplemented by at least 400 hours of supervised field instruction. Additionally, social worker conduct is bound by a Code of Ethics.

Legislation protecting the professional title “social worker” has already been enacted in 37 other states.

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