

Kansas Chapter
National Association of Social Workers
...advocating for the practice and profession of Social Work...

Testimony: SB 449

February 15, 2016

Senate Public Health and Welfare

Presented by Cynthia Schendel, LSCSW

Good afternoon. My name is Cynthia Schendel. I am the President of the Kansas Chapter, National Association of Social Workers.

I am a Licensed Specialist Clinical Social Worker (LSCSW). For over thirty years, I have been providing services to children and families in the Kansas City area. Through my career, I have offered my services as a clinical supervisor to help newer social workers advance their career and license.

In its current form, KNASW is opposed to SB 449. Our opposition can be overcome by making two amendments to the bill.

1. The first issue has to do with the creation of a “board-approved clinical supervisor.”

This new designation creates several problems:

- The new designation only applies to three of the six professions. This is an arbitrary and unfair mandate, because, with the exception of Ph.D Psychologists, all of the disciplines have similar requirements for post-graduate clinical supervision to advance to independent licensure.
- The mandate imposes recurring costs. These include licensing fees, additional training and on-going continuing education requirements. Many social work clinical supervisors volunteer or charge a minimal fee to offer this service. Volunteering or minimal fees already costs the clinical supervisor. The required weekly supervisory meetings and the minimum two year commitment takes away from seeing regular paying clients. More costs will be a disincentive.
- Clinical supervisors are already in short supply. The mandate will make it more difficult to find a clinical supervisor because many will not be able to justify the increased costs in time and expense. Since clinical supervision is necessary to advance to independent licensure, this mandate will ultimately reduce the workforce of independent practitioners.

KNASW respectfully requests that you amend the bill by striking New Section 11 in the bill.

2. The second issue has to do with strengthening public protection when approving applicants who have felony convictions

- Currently, the Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board (BSRB) may approve an applicant for social work licensure who has a felony conviction on their record. KNASW asks that this be increased to a 2/3 vote by the BSRB instead of a simple majority.
- This is already the practice of another regulatory board. When there is an applicant with a felony conviction, the Board of Healing Arts requires a 2/3 majority vote to approve the applicant for licensure.

This request is rooted in a situation of several years ago. An individual, who had a felony conviction (murder) applied for licensure as a social worker. The two social workers on the board, at that time, reviewed the situation. They concluded that the person was not rehabilitated enough for the privilege of social work licensure.

Against the recommendation of the social workers, other members of the board outvoted them and approved the individual for licensure.

KNASW respectfully requests you to adopt language drawn from the Board of Healing Arts physicians practice act into the Social Work practice act.

In closing, on behalf of the social work profession and the people we serve, KNASW respectfully requests these two changes to affirm regulatory fairness and strengthen public protection.

Thank you for your consideration.

Contact information

Kansas Chapter, National Association of Social Workers

Sky Westerlund, LMSW, Executive Director: 785.354.4804 or (cell)785.393.4642; sky@naswkansas.com

Cynthia Schendel, LSCSW, Chapter President: 785.913.558.2886; cschen56@hotmail.com

Terry Humphrey, Lobbyist: 785.221.8215; terry@terryhumphrey.com