

Tim Davis, Ph.D., LCSW
Hays, Kansas

Email: todayis@fhsu.edu
Mobile: 785-639-3590

Committee on Health and Human Services
Testimony regarding HB2340
Proponent if Amended

Monday, February 13, 2023

Dear members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to express my concern with HB 2340.

I have been a Licensed Specialist Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) since 2001. I have a private practice serving children and families in the Hays area for over 20 years. I also currently provide clinical supervision for master's level social workers seeking clinical licensure. I have supervised many practitioners over the years, and have done this work both as a volunteer, and at times receiving minimal compensation to cover the additional professional liability insurance required. I am one of just a handful of LCSWs in this part of the state who has taken on this added responsibility. I do so because I believe that the people of western Kansas deserve quality services from qualified practitioners. I desire to be a part of the solution, to develop well-trained social workers to fill the gap in services, and to serve the underserved.

I am also the Chair of the Fort Hays State University Department of Social Work. In this capacity, I work with faculty to train individuals to become social workers, many of whom go on to seek independent clinical licensure. A central mission of our programs is to train practitioners to serve in underserved communities and work with agencies to support professional practice in Kansas.

If passed, HB 2340, will cause me to rethink my willingness to provide clinical supervision. Under this bill, BSRB will require that I obtain status as a "board-approved supervisor." This would necessitate completing an undefined number of hours of clinical supervision training, paying an undefined fee to get the title, as well as having at least three hours of continuing education specific to clinical supervision each licensure cycle.

Providing clinical supervision is both a mentoring and screening responsibility. I mentor social workers to help them increase their skills and knowledge in working with people, specifically for mental health and substance abuse diagnosis and treatment. Screening responsibilities include evaluating whether my supervisees are developing the appropriate level of expertise necessary for independent practice. This is an undertaking that licensed professionals already take very seriously.

Requiring additional credentialing will create a dilemma for me. To continue to supervise social work practitioners, I would need to be a board-approved supervisor and incur all the costs and training requirements associated with the title. I suspect that many in my position will either discontinue offering supervision services or be forced to charge a standard clinical rate to recover the costs. Unfortunately, this would also reduce the potential services available for Kansans, particularly disadvantaging citizens living in underserved locations. Further, this legislation is unnecessary since all of our clinical MSW students are required to take SOCW 865 Social Work Supervision and Agency Management, where they learn the essential elements of providing supervision.

I urge you to consider the deleterious effects of the supervision section of this bill and dismiss the call to require social work supervisors to incur the additional cost of requiring a supervisor credential to offer the service of social work supervision. The passage of such a bill threatens to undermine our ongoing efforts to provide essential services to the most vulnerable Kansans. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance as you consider this bill.

Thank you.

 Tim Davis, Ph.D., LCSW