

**Testimony for the House Professional Licensure Committee**

**On House Bill 2353**

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Good morning Chairman Sturla, Chairman Adolph, members of the committee, and staff. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on this important issue. My name is Cecily Randolph, and I received my Bachelors of Social Work (BSW) from Carlow University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

As a former client of the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare and now a provider, my primary concern is to provide consumers with the best services possible.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) code of ethics mandates as its sixth ethical principle “Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.” Fulfilling this mandate social workers continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills to apply them in practice. The code of ethics specifies practice in fields where social workers will promote the well being of clients and minimize harm to others. Others working in human services are not governed by a similar code or principals.

Any person with a bachelor degree may be intelligent, helpful, and intuitive, but I think prior testifiers demonstrated those qualities do not necessarily prepare you for a career in human services. Those of us with BSWs are those things, as well as competent and prepared to engage clients in the human services system, to provide evaluation and assessment, to develop interventions, and to assist in plans for termination of services.

Shouldn't we as a society seek to hire the most competent staff? Clients in the human services system are entitled to the same quality services as an individual expects in the health care system. I would also state that BSW professionals are well prepared and competent to work as the initial point of contact within any social service organization. In addition, BSW students study hundreds of theories, the NASW code of ethics, various practice methods, and during role play receive important feedback from our professors. As social work interns, BSWs are required to complete a minimum of 500 hours of field experience. BSW professionals are ready to assist those in need.

In most professions, licensure sets a level of professionalism. For social workers on every level of education, licensure provides this standard. I ask you today to give the social service consumers of Pennsylvania the competent staff they deserve by considering the creation of a human services license!