



Representative Peter Fischer, Chair
Human Service Policy
February 28, 2023

Chair Fischer and Human Service Policy Committee Members,

On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers, MN Chapter (NASW - MN) and the MN Coalition of Licensed Social Workers (Coalition of Social Workers), we are writing in support of House File 1436, a bill that supports expanding and diversifying the mental health workforce.

NASW - MN is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in our state, representing over 2000 social workers. The Coalition of Social Workers unifies membership organizations for licensed social workers. Collectively, our organizations offer experience and expertise in mental health practice.

People seeking mental health support deserve the highest quality of care, and that includes the option to choose among professionals who share their identity and lived experiences. Yet, the BIPOC community is under-represented among mental health professionals. It is important that we take steps to address this issue.

This bill has many provisions that will expand the mental health workforce. It will:

- Support the growth of mental health supervisors by providing grants to providers serving primarily clients from under-represented populations.
- Create and fund the mental health cultural community continuing education grant program. It will support mental health professionals from underrepresented communities to obtain training to become clinical supervisors.
- Expand the mental health provider loan forgiveness grant to include providers while they obtain required supervision hours.
- Create and fund a mental health provider scholarship grant program so that employees working in mental health settings can pursue clinical training.

We support efforts to diversify and train our workforce to ensure the highest quality of care for our clients. Please support House File 1436. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Karen E. Goodenough in black ink.

Karen E. Goodenough, PhD, LGSW
Executive Director
NASW-MN

Handwritten signature of Karen A. Frees in black ink.

Karen Frees, MSSW, LICSW
Chair
Coalition of Social Workers

Handwritten signature of Jennifer Arneson in black ink.

Jenny Arneson, MSW, LGSW
Legislative Consultant
NASW-MN
Coalition of Social Workers