

BILL ANALYSIS

		<u>DATE:</u>	1/22/2008
<u>COMMITTEE:</u>	Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure	<u>BILL NO.:</u>	HB 1693
<u>PRIME SPONSOR:</u>	Rep. Gergley	<u>PRINTER NO.</u>	2665

House Bill 1693 amends the Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors Act to provide for endorsement of out-of-state licensed clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, and professional counselors and provide title protection to the use of “social worker”.

Section 10 of the Act, provides that the board shall have the power to grant a reciprocal license to an applicant who is licensed or certified in another state and has demonstrated qualifications which equal or exceed those required by this Commonwealth. The board may not grant reciprocity unless the state in which the applicant is licensed affords reciprocal treatment to licensed persons who are residents of this Commonwealth. Currently, there are no reciprocal agreements with other states. Under section 7, qualifications for license of the act require the applicant among other criteria to pass an examination.

House Bill 1693 amends the act to provide for *endorsement* of out-of-state:
Licensed Clinical Social workers
Marriage and family therapists
Professional Counselors

Endorsement permits the board to approve an applicant for licensure of an out of state individual who is licensed in another jurisdiction. The license would be issued by the board **without examination.**

The applicant would be submitting proof of good moral character, including no felony drug conviction and education identical to in-state applicants. They must also provide proof that the license is in good standing and have been actively engaged in the practice for five of the last seven years immediately preceding the filing of the application for licensure by endorsement. In addition they must complete a minimum of 3,000 hours of supervised clinical experience acceptable to the board. Pennsylvania requires 3600 hours for Pennsylvania applicants. The additional experience requirement is to compensate for the reduction in the required hours.

HB1693 contains a definition of “social worker” as an individual who has a Bachelor’s Degree, Master’s Degree or Doctoral Degree in social work or social welfare. This provides title protection for the title of “social worker.” Currently, only the title “licensed social worker” is protected, however, not every individual called a social worker is required to be licensed.

This act shall take effect in 60 days.