

Testimony of Samantha Fonda, MSW Candidate, Uconn School of Social Work
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Public Health Committee
February 28, 2014

Testimony in support of SB 124: **An Act Concerning Licensure Requirements For Master Social Workers**

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson and the Honorable Members of the Public Health Committee

I am standing in front of you today as an MSW student at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work. I am graduating in May of this year and looking forward to starting my career in this field. Uconn School of Social Work is currently an accredited program, so the bill in question adds language that does not necessarily affect the status of my program's graduates at this time. However, as a community, Social Workers support one another and are determined to grow this field and build strength, as you have seen with all the work that has been done to gain approval and funding for the LMSW.

So, I stand here to support my colleagues who are part of institutions currently going through the lengthy accreditation process through The Council on Social Work Education. I support the National Association of Social Workers, Connecticut Chapter's decision to back this change in language for the current LMSW licensure bill. The requirements of the accreditation process in terms of time that must pass by has a great potential to limit the first graduating class of social workers in pursuing their careers should licensure be a requirement for a position sought or even just a factor that would strengthen their job seeking efforts. The addition of the "in candidacy" language does not alter requirements in terms of testing and training for these individuals.

The State of Connecticut is putting itself in jeopardy by not investing more time and energy into the crafting of the LMSW program for the state and into meeting the needs of graduates. Some graduates have even taken jobs in other states that have the LMSW currently. Connecticut needs to retain these well trained individuals to work for the well-being of residents in both micro and macro capacities.

Thank You For Your Time,

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