**Originally Introduced**

**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**MARCH 5, 2019**

Ms. LEE of California

(for herself, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Ms. NORTON, Ms. BROWNLEY of

California, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. YARMUTH, Miss Rice of New York, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. EVANS, Mr. SOTO, and Mr. LEWIS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

To establish the Social Work Reinvestment Act with the Virginia General Assembly and the Governor of Virginia to support policy issues related to **recruitment, retention, research,** and **reinvestment** in the profession of social work.

**SOCIAL WORK.—The term “social work” means—**

**(A)** the professional activity of helping individuals, groups, or communities enhance or restore capacity for social and psychosocial functioning and creating societal conditions favorable to such enhancement or restoration;

**(B)** the professional application of values, principles, and techniques related to the activity described in subparagraph (A), including—

**(i)** diagnosing mental and emotional disorders and treating individuals, families, or groups for such disorders;

**(ii)** helping communities or groups provide or improve social and health services and participating in relevant legislative processes to achieve such goals; and  
**(iii)** helping individuals, families, or groups obtain tangible services, including personal, protective, informational, advisory, community, or maintenance services in order to improve the overall well-being of individuals; and

**(C)** a professional activity that requires knowledge of human development, the behavior of social, economic, and cultural institutions, and the interaction between such development and behavior.

**SOCIAL WORK RESEARCHER.—**The term “social work researcher” means a faculty member of an institution of higher education, masters or doctoral level researcher (M.S.W. and/or Ph.D./DSW in social work) engaged in the study of social work for an entity such as a university, government entity, research institute, or community agency at an individual, family, group, community, organizational, or policy level, focusing across the human life span on prevention, treatment, and aftercare of, intervention in, and rehabilitation from, acute and chronic social and psychosocial conditions, including the study of the effect of policies on social work practice.

**SOCIAL WORKER.—** Means a person trained to provide service and action to effect changes in human behavior, emotional responses, and the social conditions by the application of the values, principles, methods, and procedures of the profession of social work.The term “social worker” means an individual with a baccalaureate, master’s, or doctoral degree in social work from an institution of higher education accredited by the Council on Social Work Education who uses knowledge and skills to provide social work services for individuals, families, groups, communities, organizations, or society in general.

**Duties  
Study.** The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall conduct a comprehensive study to examine and assess

1) The professional capacity of the social work workforce to successfully serve and serve and

respond to the increasing biopsychosocial needs of individuals, groups, and communities in

areas related to-

a) Aging;  
b) Child Welfare;  
c) Military and Veterans Affairs;  
d) Mental and Behavioral Health and Disability;  
e) Criminal Justice and Correctional Systems;  
f) Health and other issues affecting women and families; and g) Other topics identified by the Virginia Board of Social Work;

2) Workforce challenges facing the profession of social work, including high educational debt,

lack of fair market compensation, the need to translate social work research practice, the

need to improve social work safety, and any other issue determined to be appropriate.

3) The effect of such challenges on the recruitment and retention of social workers;

4) The effect of such challenges and of social work shortages on the needs of clients served by

social workers; and

5) The advisability of establishing direct assistance to local governments to encourage the

engagement of social workers in social service programs.

**Report.** An annual report shall be submitted to the Governor and Virginia General Assembly by the Secretary of Health and Human Services containing specific findings and conclusions regarding the need to recruit and retain social workers, to conduct research on the social work profession, and to reinvest in the profession. The report shall include recommendations and strategies for corrective actions to ensure a robust social work workforce capable of keeping up with the demand of services. The Secretary of Health and Human Services may provide to the Governor and to Virginia General Assembly any additional findings or recommendations considered to be important.

**SEC.201. WORKPLACE IMPROVEMENT FUNDING.**

a) **AUTHORIZED.** Shall provide funding to 1 eligible Virginia State Department of Social Services

entity described in subsection (d) to assist

the entity in carrying out a workplace improvement program to address concerns for the

social work profession, including caseloads, salary, compensation, social worker safety,

supervision, and working conditions.

b) **EQUAL AMOUNTS.** Shall award to the entity under this section $1,000.000.00 per fiscal

year for 2 consecutive fiscal years beginning with the first fiscal year that begins after the

date of the enactment of this Act.

c) **STATE GOVERNMENTS.** The entity recipient under this section shall be agencies

of state governments.

d) **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.** An entity eligible under this section shall-

1) Work in a social work capacity  
2) Demonstrate that the entity needs to improve in one or more of the workplace

concern areas described in subsection (a);  
3) Provide services to individuals of different racial, ethnic, cultural, geographic,

religious, linguistic, and class backgrounds, and different genders and sexual

orientations;  
4) Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the concerns of the groups

described in paragraph (3); and

5) Employ individuals who represent themselves as competent to provide social

work services within the boundaries of an individual with a baccalaureate, masters,

or doctoral degree in social work from an institution of higher education accredited

by the Council on Social Work Education

6) Employ clinical social workers. Clinical social work is a specialty practice area of social

work which focuses on the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of

mental illness, emotional, and other behavioral disturbances. Social workers who

provide these services are required to be licensed at the clinical level in their state of

practice.

e)  **PRIORITY.** In selecting recipients under this section, shall give priority to eligible entities

1) That have proven to be fiscally responsible, administratively capable, and

otherwise equipped to oversee and monitor a workplace improvement program

under this section, including through a labor management partnership;

2) That are knowledgeable about relevant social work workforce trends; and;

3) That have not less than 2 years of experience relevant to the social work

workplace improvement program.

f) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.** There are authorized to be appropriated

$2,000,000.00 under this section.

**SECT.202. RESEARCH FUNDING.**

a) **AUTHORIZED.** Shall provide funding to 4 social workers who hold a masters and/or doctoral

degree in social work for research in social work

1) To further the knowledge base about effective social work interventions; and

2) To promote usable strategies to translate research into practice across diverse

community settings and service systems.

b) **EQUAL AMOUNTS.** Shall provide funding to 4 recipients under this section $250,000.00

($62,500.00 each) per fiscal year for 2 consecutive fiscal years beginning with the first fiscal

year that begins after the date of the enactment of this Act.

c) **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.** To be eligible under this section, a social worker shall-

1)  Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the concerns of individuals from different racial, ethnic, cultural, geographic, religious, linguistic, and class backgrounds, and different genders and sexual orientations; and

2)  Individuals who represent themselves as competent to provide social work services only within the boundaries of an individual with a baccalaureate, masters, or doctoral degree in social work from an institution of higher education accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

d) **MINORITY REPRESENTATION**-No less than 2 of the grant recipients under this section shall

be employed by a Historically Black College or University or minority serving institution.

e) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.** There are authorized to be appropriated

$500,000.00 under this section.

**SEC.203. EDUCATION AND TRAINING.**

a) **AUTHORIZED.** Shall award 4 eligible universities or colleges to support the recruitment and

education of social work students and the professional development of social work faculty in

Baccalaureate, Master’s and Doctoral degree programs accredited by the Council on Social

Work Education.

b) **EQUAL AMOUNTS.** Shall award to each of the 4 recipients under this section $100,000.00 per

fiscal year for 2 consecutive fiscal years beginning with the first fiscal year that begins after

the date of the enactment of this Act.

c) **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.** To be eligible under this section, an university or college shall

demonstrate that

1. The institution enrolls social work students from different racial, ethnic, cultural,

geographic, religious, linguistic, and class backgrounds, and different genders and sexual orientations; and

1. The institution has knowledge and understanding of the concerns of the groups

described in paragraph (1).

d) **INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENT.** Not less than 2 of the recipients under this section shall be

Historically Black Colleges or Universities.

e) **PRIORITY.** In selecting grant recipients under this section, the state shall give priority to

institutions of higher education

1. An institution of higher education accredited by the Council on Social Work

Education, and provides baccalaureate, masters, or doctoral degrees in social work.

1. That have a graduation rate of not less than 80 percent for social work students;

and

1. That exhibit an ability to recruit social workers from, and place social workers in,

areas with a high need and high demand population.

f)  **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.** There are authorized to be appropriated

$800,000.00 under this section.

**SEC.204. OUTREACH EFFORTS.**

a) **ESTABLISHMENT.** Shall work with the National Association of Social Workers and the Council

on Social Work Education. Such entity shall

1) have experience in coordinating the transfer of information and ideas among entities

engaged in social work research, practice, education, and policymaking; and

b)  **SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES.**

1)  Engage in activities to build on the efforts of the National Association of Social

Workers National Center for Workforce Studies;

2)  Shall develop and issue public service announcements that advertise and

promote the social work profession throughout appropriate media outlets, including

television or radio, in a manner intended to reach as wide and diverse of an audience

as possible, highlight the advantages and rewards of social work, and encourage

individuals to enter the social work profession

3)  Collect, monitor, prepare, and distribute data, and submit a report to the Governor,

the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and Virginia General Assembly that

includes recommendations regarding the need to recruit new social workers, retain

current social workers, conduct social work research, and reinvest in the profession of

social work;

c)  **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.** There are authorized to be appropriated

$600,000.00 to carry out this section for 2 fiscal years.