



SOCIAL WORK VOICES

PURPOSE: The genesis of “100 Social Work Voices” is our social work professional responsibility to advance our skills and knowledge in order to assure and provide equitable quality services to all people on all levels of practice throughout all universal systems. Social workers who attend are charged to give back and pay forward through bridging and blending the voices of the social work academy and profession. Social Work Voices emphasis is on accountability for individual professional growth. Together, social work educators and practitioners will work to create a plan of action for ourselves and our professional associations. Every social work attendee will commit to create a specific individual deliverable that can be achieved in a year. The outcome deliverables will be used to initiate advocacy efforts on the state, national and global levels, and to inform future Social Work Voices, LLC.

Sponsors of Social Work Voices

Adelphi University
School of Social Work

Boston College
School of Social Work

Council on Social Work Education

Howard University
School of Social Work

Loyola University Chicago
School of Social Work

Morgan State University
School of Social Work

National Association of Social Workers

Norfolk State University

North Carolina State University
Department of Social Work

Simmons University
School of Social Work

The University of Utah
College of Social Work

University of Georgia
School of Social Work

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
School of Social Work

University of Houston
Graduate College of Social Work

University of Washington
School of Social Work

Additional Supporter:

Social Justice Solutions
*Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr.,
Social Work Reinvestment Act Petition*

Total Signatures: 23,465

Code: Title 63.2. Welfare (Social Services)

SB 1339 Foster care; numerous changes to laws governing provision of services in the Commonwealth.

Introduced by: **Bryce E. Reeves | Foster care omnibus**. Makes numerous changes to the laws governing the provision of foster care services in the Commonwealth. Among other things, the bill (i) allows the Commissioner of Social Services to develop and implement a corrective action plan for or assume temporary control over the foster care services of a local board of social services upon determining that the local board (a) has failed to provide foster care services or make placement and removal decisions in accordance with applicable laws or regulations or (b) has taken any action that poses a substantial risk to the health, safety, or well-being of any child under its supervision and control; (ii) requires the Commissioner to create within the State Department of Social Services (the Department) a foster care health and safety director position; (iii) directs the Commissioner to establish and maintain a confidential hotline to receive reports and complaints from foster parents and other persons regarding violations of laws or regulations applicable to foster care and any other matters related to the health, safety, or well-being of children in foster care; (iv) directs the Department to develop and implement a more reliable, structured, and comprehensive case review and quality improvement process to monitor and improve foster care services provided by local boards and departments of social services; and (v) requires the Department to establish and update annually a caseload standard that limits the number of foster care cases that may be assigned to each foster care caseworker.

H.R.1532 - Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr., Social Work Reinvestment Act 116th Congress (2019-2020)

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.

I. Workplace Improvement Funding, Research Funding, and Education and Training

Governor Ralph Northam (January 9, 2019)

- “We made strategic changes to the Commonwealth’s workforce development system to better prepare Virginians for well-paid, sustainable, and in-demand jobs.”

Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (2018)

- “VDSS has historically narrowly interpreted its supervisory responsibilities, which are set in statute, and past VDSS leaders have equivocated about the state’s ability to assertively supervise foster care services and hold local departments of social services accountable. To improve its effectiveness as supervisor of the system, VDSS also needs to more closely monitor local departments’ child welfare practices.”

Capacity Building Center for States (2017)

- “Child welfare professionals have a deep and often quiet impact on children’s lives—working to connect families with resources, determining appropriate placements, and responding around the clock to address emergencies. The complex story of child welfare work is hard to convey to the community; while most people can describe the careers of professionals with whom they interact—police officers or nurses, for example—the day-to-day efforts of child welfare professionals are often invisible from public view.”

National Association of Social Workers (2013)

- “Each day, social workers face critical decisions about the lives of vulnerable children and youths while working in stressful environments that include high caseloads and workloads, inadequate supervision, safety concerns, and limited training and resources (for example, access to emerging technology). All of these conditions, coupled with low salaries and administrative burdens, can affect the recruitment and retention of qualified staff.”

Social Work Policy Institute (2010)

- “High caseloads lead to increased staff turnover as well as increased costs and decreases in quality delivery of services.”

National Association of Social Workers (2015)

- “A qualified and stable child welfare workforce is the foundation of child welfare service delivery. Ensuring that the needs of children who experience or who are at risk for maltreatment are addressed is critical as the impact of adverse childhood experiences cascades throughout the lifetime, resulting in higher risks for health and mental health issues, and adverse economic and employment outcomes.”

National Association of Social Workers (2015)

- “Child welfare systems across the country are stretched beyond capacity, causing many social work professionals to be extremely overburdened. With solid education and training, supervision and support, and access to the appropriate resources, social workers can effectively serve children, youths, and families involved in child welfare to ensure healthier outcomes and enhanced well-being.”

The George Washington University, Health Workforce Institute and School of Nursing (2017)

- Out of 671,828 Social Workers, roughly 72.6% of Caucasians earned a Master's Degree or greater, in comparison to 19.1% of African Americans, 3.2% of Asian Americans, 0.5% American Indian and Alaskan Natives, and 0.1% Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander.

National Association of Social Workers (2019)

- Clinical social workers are one of the largest mental health care providers in the nation. They are licensed or certified to provide clinical services and diagnose and treat mental illness in private practice, psychiatric hospitals, community mental health settings, and rural health centers. They are the largest specialty group of social workers in the United States. As independent providers, they are able to seek reimbursement from third-party payers.

United States Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015)

- "The average salary in individual and family services, the largest single setting where MSWs work (31%), was \$45,000."
- "The average salary in individual and family services, the largest single setting for bachelor's majoring in social work (41%), was \$39,000."

The George Washington University, Health Workforce Institute and School of Nursing (2017)

- Unless one can get in with federal or state gov position, the pay is too low to provide for oneself and the work load is too great to be able to get part-time job and observe any level of self-care. It is not a respected profession and you are literally completely on your own for getting a job after an internship (unlike MBA programs). Also, getting a degree means very little, every employer wants licensing-which is an additional expense and time. Additionally, no state has the same process, which makes looking for work more difficult."

United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (2018)

- Approximately 116,750 people are Mental Health and Substance Abuse Workers. In 2018, the mean annual wage for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Workers was \$49,630. Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers provide services and treatment (individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, case management, client advocacy, prevention, and education) to individuals with mental health and substance abuse conditions.

National Association of Social Workers (2019)

- Gerontological social workers work directly with older adults in the context of the social environment, providing services such as screening, biopsychosocial assessment, supportive counseling, resource linkage, system navigation, service coordination, and advocacy.

Council on Social Work Education (2015)

- "Military social workers provide assistance and treatment in the transition from military to veteran status, including a continuum of care and services for military personnel and their families. As the signature injuries and diagnoses (i.e., posttraumatic stress disorder [PTSD], traumatic brain injury [TBI], substance misuse, readjustment issues, intimate partner violence, and polytrauma) evolve with current combat-related events, military social work strives to develop effective interventions and policies to aid service members, veterans, and their families and communities."

Legislation:

Workplace Improvement Funding – Shall provide funding to 1 eligible entity to assist the entity in carrying out a workplace improvement program to address concerns or the social work profession, including caseloads (in addition to reducing caseloads for foster care social workers to include child protective services and adult protective services), salary and compensation, social worker safety, supervision, and working conditions.

Research Funding – Shall provide funding to 4 social workers who hold a doctoral degree in social work for postdoctoral research in social work; To further the knowledge base about effective social work interventions; and To promote usable strategies to translate research into practice across diverse community settings and service systems.

Education and Training – Shall award 4 eligible universities or colleges to support the recruitment and education of social work students in Baccalaureate, Master's and Doctoral Degree Programs and the professional development of social work faculty.

II. Outreach Efforts

Capacity Building Center for States (2017)

- "People get most of their information about child welfare from the media (Douglas & Gushwa, 2015; Gainsborough, 2010; Landsman, 2001; Franklin & Parton, 1991). The general public's perception of the child welfare system and its workforce is influenced significantly by news stories, often focused on the relatively small number of tragic cases (Chenot, 2011)."
- "When systemic failure is perceived as a contributing factor, negative perceptions of child welfare professionals are reinforced, which can, in turn, impact families' willingness to engage with services (Schreiber, Fuller, & Pacey, 2013)."
- "Negative perceptions also can impact social work practice, and can contribute to work-related stress, secondary trauma, and staff turnover (National Association of Social Workers, 2004; Chenot, 2011)."
- Partner with universities to develop internal agency capacity in public relations and media engagement (Briar-Lawson et al., 2011).
- Consider ways to engage proactively with the media, such as sharing weekly good news stories with local outlets and holding press conferences, or distributing press releases about new child welfare initiatives (Briar-Lawson, Martinson, Briar-Bonpane, & Zox, 2011).

Legislation:

Outreach Efforts – 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; Collect, monitor, prepare, and distribute data, and submit a report 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.