

Kansas Chapter
National Association of Social Workers
...advancing the practice and profession of Social Work...

Written Testimony: SB 290

March 6, 2012

House Health and Human Services

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The Kansas Chapter, National Association of Social Workers (KNASW) is the professional association working on behalf of the profession and practice of social work in Kansas. Social workers have been licensed to practice at three levels of expertise since 1976. These are the baccalaureate (LBSW), the master (LMSW), and the clinical social worker (LCSW). There are over 6000 social workers practicing in the majority of the 105 counties in Kansas. The practice of social work is inclusive across many fields of interest including adoptions, addictions, child welfare, corrections, domestic violence, hospitals and health, hospice and palliative care, mental health, community based prevention, schools, veterans and military, and more.

The Addictions Practice Act was passed in 2010 and 2011. It licensed previously non-licensed persons performing work in the field of addictions.

Some licensed social workers may now want to also identify themselves as an “addictions counselor.” This title license does not alter the scope of practice that they already have with their social work license.

However, in order to call themselves an addictions counselor, they must be licensed as an addictions counselor or clinical addictions counselor. The current language resulted in requiring these already licensed professionals to go back to school or obtain redundant supervision for the title of addictions counselor or clinical addiction counselor.

SB 290 corrects this problem.

- The amended language permits a Licensed Baccalaureate Social Worker (LBSW) to obtain the title license of Addictions Counselor (LAC) by having a minimum number of coursework on substance abuse and passing the addictions national examination. The LBSW and the LAC are both a baccalaureate level license.
- The independent Licensed Specialist Clinical Social Worker (LSCSW) will be able to obtain the title license of Clinical Addictions Counselor by presenting an attestation and passing the national addictions examination.

These amendments represent a compromise worked out between the long time licensed professions under the BSRB and the newly licensed addictions counselors, meeting the needs of both.

KNASW supports the amended language and asks for your support as well.