



## MaMHCA

### Massachusetts Mental Health Counselors Association

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#### **HB 1706 An Act establishing a board of registration of licensed mental health counselors**

1. This legislation, sponsored by Rep. Josh Cutler (D-Duxbury), establishes a 9 member board of registration of mental health counselors and creating a first tier license for recently graduating students and removing the oversight away from the allied board of mental health services. This bill is vital to expanding support to mental health providers by streamlining the licensure process, clarifying the license requirements and expectations and improving overall efficiency within the licensing board.
2. Licensed Mental Health Counselors (LMHCs) have been steadily increasing in numbers over the past 10 years. LMHCs have reached over 6000 providers within the Commonwealth and the Allied Board has recently said they are receiving 80 -100 applications for LMHC license per month.
  - **This places resource hardships on the board of allied mental health as they continue to oversee four other professions within the same board division.**
3. Consumer protection is put at risk due to low attendance of other license disciplines
  - **Work regarding LMHCs including upgrading regulations, review of complaints and disciplinary cases, audits and review of license applications are currently being overseen by multiple disciplines outside of LMHCs.**
4. HB 1706 Would create an entry level License for MA (the LSMHC – Licensed Supervised Mental Health Counselor) graduates obtaining work experience to obtain their LMHC license.
  - **There would be an increase in consumer protection by clarifying the counselor's role.**
  - **Promote Workforce Development by allowing entry level mental health counselors to become eligible for state and federal loan reimbursement programs**
  - **Provides agencies with post-MA individuals with billing in LMHC track.**

**Please support HB 1706 to help ensure more efficient and streamlined consumer protection and professional oversight.**