WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2021 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 2193

BY DELEGATE ROWE

[Introduced February 10, 2021; Referred to the

Committee on Government Organization then the

Judiciary]

1   A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section,

2   designated §30-30-14a, relating to social workers and creating a litigation practice license

3   for social workers.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 30. SOCIAL WORKERS.

§30-30-14a. Litigation practice license to practice as a social worker.

1   The Board of Social Work, in cooperation with the Supreme Court of Appeals and the

2   higher education institutions in the state, shall review special licensing for social workers licensed

3   under this article to practice independently in the courts of the state in juvenile, child abuse and

4   negligent proceedings. Their specialty shall be focused on pre- and post-litigation prevention

5   services.

6   The Legislature finds that many circuit courts are overloaded with juvenile and child abuse

7   cases and too few prevention outcomes. "Litigation social workers", acting as independent

8   professionals, would be able to more efficiently seek and secure better outcomes than out-of-

9   home placement or free release of children or juveniles back into dysfunctional family

10   relationships with few or no services for the needs of children or juveniles. "Litigation social

11   workers" would encourage and lead court-ordered mediation for needed services, and would

12   participate fully in the litigation process with court appointments as needed. The purpose, training

13   and performance of the "litigation social workers" shall be determined by the Supreme Court of

14   Appeals in cooperation with the Board of Social Workers and participating university graduate

15   social work programs.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to create a litigation practice license for social workers.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law
and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.