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HOUSE BILL 1357

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State of Washington                      61st Legislature                      2009 Regular Session

By Representatives Pettigrew, Dickerson, Orwall, Walsh, Moeller,  
Kenney, and Wood

Read first time 01/19/09. Referred to Committee on Health Care & Wellness.

1            AN ACT Relating to protecting consumers by assuring persons using  
2 the title of social worker have graduated with a degree in social work  
3 from an educational program accredited by the council on social work  
4 education; adding a new section to chapter 28B.85 RCW; and creating a  
5 new section.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

7            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the practice of  
8 social work improves the lives of many people throughout the state of  
9 Washington by focusing on a broad spectrum of social sciences to  
10 enhance the quality of life and develop the full potential of each  
11 client. The legislature further finds that those individuals who work  
12 as social workers should have a degree from an accredited institution  
13 of higher education approved by the council on social work education to  
14 appropriately address their clients' problems, needs, and concerns so  
15 that their clients may achieve the maximum possible enhancement of  
16 their quality of life, and develop to their full potential.

17            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.85 RCW  
18 to read as follows:

1           (1) To safeguard Washington residents from the unqualified or  
2 improper practice of social work, a person may not represent himself or  
3 herself as a social worker unless qualified as a social worker as  
4 defined in this section.

5           (2) For purposes of this section, "social worker" means a person  
6 who meets one of the following qualifications:

7           (a) Is licensed under RCW 18.225.090 as an advanced social worker  
8 or an independent clinical social worker; or

9           (b) Has graduated with a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree  
10 from a social work educational program accredited by the council on  
11 social work education.

12           (3) No public agency or private entity doing business in Washington  
13 may use the title of social worker or a form of the title for  
14 describing or designating volunteer or employment positions or within  
15 contracts for services, reference materials, manuals, or other  
16 documents, unless the volunteers or employees working in those  
17 positions are qualified as a social worker as defined in this section.

18           (4) This section does not apply to persons employed in Washington  
19 on the effective date of this section under the job title of social  
20 worker or a form of the title, during the time of their continued  
21 employment in the same position and under the same job description and  
22 title held on the effective date of this section.

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