

**Virginia Society for Clinical Social Work
VSCSW Achieves Legislative Success
March, 2006
Prepared by Mark O'Shea, VSCSW Legislative Chair**

During the recent Virginia Legislative Session, our legislative "team" built strong, new coalitions and collaborated to protect our licensure law.

The issue developed very quickly when NASW-VA submitted a bill that would have created a new licensure category, "Professional Social Worker." HB 1146 would have required a licensure level based only on having a BSW or MSW degree, not on experience. This catch-all level would have replaced the current, but rarely used, LSW level. If this bill had passed, it would have likely created confusion among the public about the meaning of LCSW.

We consulted with Laura Groshong, Government Relations Chair for the Clinical Social Work Federation. She has worked on licensure laws in over 30 states and helped Chris Spanos, our Virginia lobbyist, and me develop a successful strategy that defeated HB 1146. The bill was referred to the Board of Social Work for further study and we will be developing a position paper to influence the outcome of that study. I was able to develop relationships with members of the Senate Health Professions Subcommittee and Health and Education Committee which greatly helped our cause. The work of VSCSW members Joe Lynch, Bill Russell, Wayne Martin, Sharon Payne and others was equally valuable. Jane Hundley, VSCSW president, was instrumental in guiding our Board through the process of developing a stance on this issue and in building ties with the Greater Washington Society which also has members in Virginia.

This effort has highlighted the need for more ongoing funding of legislative efforts to continue to protect our practices and to move forward with pro-active legislation on behalf of VSCSW members. Please consider the hundreds of unpaid (or underpaid) hours that went into this effort, and make a donation to the Society. I believe you will feel as empowered as I do about standing up for our interests and making a legislative difference. Please send the tear-off below with your check. Thanks for your help!

YES, I want to support VSCSW's legislative work!

Enclosed please find my check for ____\$50 ____\$100 ____Other_____

Name_____ Address_____

Please make out your check to **VSCSW** and note "Legislative Work" on the memo line.

VSCSW
10106-C Palace Way
Richmond, VA 23238
Or donate online at vscsw.org.