

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023**

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HOUSE BILL 623

Short Title: The Kelly Spangler Study Bill. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Crawford, Sasser, Reeder, and Staton-Williams (Primary Sponsors).

For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Health, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

April 18, 2023

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AND OTHER ENTITIES TO STUDY THE EXEMPTION OF ALLOWING THE USE OF THE SOCIAL WORKER TITLE FOR LOCAL AND STATE EMPLOYEES.

Whereas, the North Carolina Social Work Certification and Licensure Act allows for individuals who are employed by an agency of a local or State governmental entity to be exempt from the law; and

Whereas, non-social work degreed staff are eligible to be classified as social workers in the North Carolina State Social Work Classification Series; and

Whereas, a social worker possesses a specific body of professional knowledge, training, and experience that is gained when the social worker acquires their social work degree from a school accredited by the Council on Social Work Education; and

Whereas, not requiring governmental staff to have a social work degree from an accredited program allows for the provision of social work services to the public from staff that have no formal social work education or training; and

Whereas, there is a growing need to document the effectiveness of all State and local government programs and services, and outcomes are impacted negatively when the quality and training of the workers is inadequate; Now, therefore,
The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. The Department of Health and Human Services (Department) shall coordinate a study to examine and evaluate the efficacy and use of the exemption to allow any individual who is employed by an agency of a local or State government entity to use the title of "social worker" without having an educational degree in social work under G.S. 90B-10(c) and any modifications to the current provision that should be considered by the General Assembly of North Carolina. The Department shall include and consult with the following entities in the study: (i) the Department of Adult Correction, (ii) the North Carolina Social Work Certification and Licensure Board, (iii) the North Carolina Public Health Association, (iv) the North Carolina Association of County Departments of Social Services, (v) the National Association of Social Workers North Carolina, and (vi) any other local stakeholders and other interested parties. No later than April 1, 2024, the Department shall submit a report with any recommendations and findings to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services, the Joint Legislative Administrative Procedure Oversight Committee, and the Fiscal Research Division.

SECTION 2. This act is effective when it becomes law.

