



American Music Therapy Association

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March 21, 2016

RE: HB 1438

Madam Chair Harhart and Members of the House Professional Licensure Committee:

My name is Judy Simpson. I am a board certified music therapist and serve as the Director of Government Relations for the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA). Thank you for this opportunity to speak in support of HB 1438.

The profession of music therapy was started within the Veterans' Administration healthcare system following World Wars I and II when musicians offered successful interventions to soldiers diagnosed with what we know today as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Our national association was founded in 1950, and is responsible for maintaining standards in music therapy education, clinical training, practice, professional competencies and a Code of Ethics.

Music therapy is a nationally recognized allied health profession with over 70 years of clinical history in the United States.

The United States Code lists music therapy as a disease prevention and health promotion service and as a supportive service under Title 42: The Public Health and Welfare, as a part of the Older Americans Act.

Music therapy is listed on the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) schedule under Professional and Allied Healthcare Staffing Services.

Music therapists are eligible to apply for the National Provider Identifier system established as a HIPAA requirement. Music therapists are categorized under "Respiratory, Developmental, Rehabilitative and Restorative Service Providers".

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recognizes music therapy for Medicare reimbursement in Partial Hospitalization Programs (PHP).

CMS also recognizes music therapy on the Minimum Data Set (MDS) 3.0 assessment tool utilized in skilled and residential nursing facilities.

The U.S. Department of Education recognizes music therapy as a related service under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and can be included on a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) if found necessary for a child to benefit from his/her special education program.

Despite these examples of national recognition within healthcare and education, consumers continue to encounter misrepresentation of the profession from non-qualified individuals and consistently experience barriers to service access due to the lack of inclusion of the profession

and its national board certification credential within state statute and agency regulations. Passage of HB 1438 will address these consumer issues by creating a music therapy license, ensuring professional competency across all clinical practice areas.

With any proposed change in occupational regulation, we understand that our peers in other rehabilitation professions may have questions. Acknowledging that you may hear opposition statements today from representatives of these professions. I would like to take the opportunity to alleviate any concerns and demonstrate the good faith efforts we have made over the past four years in other states to reach compromises within bill language so that consumers benefit from the collaborative and interdisciplinary team approach that exists among our professions at the clinical level.

HB 1438 already includes language within the music therapy definition that has been adopted in other states and which was specifically based upon requests for clarification received from other professional associations. In fact, since a formal meeting among associations in 2012, AMTA has consistently followed suggestions presented by the American Speech Language Hearing Association regarding state recognition communication. ASHA recommended that music therapists reach out to individual state speech-language-hearing associations as music therapy legislation is introduced in an effort to reach a compromise in each state. That process has been successful in other states and we are confident that any concerns in Pennsylvania can also be resolved.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 1438.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judy Simpson".

Judy Simpson, MT-BC
Managed Healthcare Professional
Director of Government Relations
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