

HOUSE PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE COMMITTEE  
INFORMATIONAL MEETING ON HOUSE BILL 1356

AUGUST 8, 2023

TESTIMONY: Meng-Shan Lee, PhD, MT-BC

Chairman Burns, Chairman Metzgar and members of the Pennsylvania House Licensure Committee:

My name is Dr. Meng-Shan Lee, and I am a board-certified music therapist and an assistant professor in music therapy at Duquesne University. I am also an international scholar who has presented regularly at regional and international conferences. When I worked as a music therapist at the Taipei Veterans General Hospital in Taiwan, I was fascinated by the power of music and music therapy and wanted to pursue a higher degree. As I searched the music therapy programs in the States, I noticed that Pennsylvania has 10 undergraduate and 5 graduate music therapy programs leading me to believe that with so many music therapy programs, Pennsylvania may have more facilities offering music therapy service.

As an international student, the location of the universities is important as it relates to the practicum, internship opportunities, and possible job market after graduation. However, as many of my peers and I started to search for jobs as a music therapist in Pennsylvania, the job market was not ideal nor friendly especially for international clinicians. Many facilities even rescinded their offer due to the need to provide sponsorship for the working visa. This results in qualified and well-trained international music therapists needing to relocate to other states or other countries for jobs, which further affects the willingness of future international students to study in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania has the largest number of undergraduate and graduate music therapy programs in the country. As an international clinician and educator, I believe that the music therapy licensure will not only protect Pennsylvania's citizens from harm and increase access but will attract more international students to pursue higher education in music therapy in Pennsylvania. This would provide more clinical-trained and educated healthcare providers. Professional licensure for music therapy in Pennsylvania will make a positive impact on hiring board-certified music therapists who have the knowledge of the benefits and potential harms in using music. Professional Music Therapy licensure will protect the citizens of Pennsylvanians that receive music therapy services.

Please support efforts to License Professional Music Therapists and place them under the State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors by voting "yes" on House Bill 1356.

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