

Dear Chairwoman Pendergrass, and Members of Health and Government Operations Committee:

My name is Cheryl Johnston and I am the parent of a daughter with Down syndrome. I am writing to give my support to [HB1102] to create a Music Therapist Advisory Committee within the State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists for music therapy licensure which will recognize the MT-BC (music therapist - board certified) national credential in Maryland. This bill is important because it will allow Maryland citizens to more easily access music therapy services and it will protect the public by ensuring that these services are provided by trained and qualified practitioners.

My child, Morgan, has received music therapy services for 6 years. Morgan had an extremely limited vocabulary during her ECI time. However, when she would sing, her vocabulary and articulation would greatly expand. I attended a presentation on music therapy and found the ticket. It was initially difficult to add it to her IEP as the county advised they did not have the funds. We continued to push for Morgan's rights and secured music therapy on her IEP in ECI. She is now in fourth grade and music therapy has not only extended her vocabulary and socialization but is utilized in reaching her IEP goals in reading, math, and behavior. The music therapists also provide consult to Morgan's general education teachers to transition her successes from music therapy into the classroom. Without this service, Morgan would be extremely behind in her education. We also utilize music therapy outside of school and would benefit from insurance assistance as we pay out of pocket for all of it. However, it is too valuable to Morgan's education to give up!

Please support efforts to establish a Music Therapist Advisory Committee within the State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists for music therapy licensure by voting "yes" for [HB1102].

Sincerely,

Cheryl Johnston