

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

My name is Kerry Devlin and I am a Board Certified Music Therapist working in Maryland. At [Annapolis Music Therapy](#) (AMT), we serve over 250 clients within the pediatric, disability, mental health, older adult, and medical communities here in Anne Arundel County. Our clients come from all walks of life, and our team of 6 board certified music therapists are proud to use music as a therapeutic to support them in achieving their diverse clinical and personal goals.

Annapolis Music Therapy's unique music programming, such as our [5 free monthly intergenerational music therapy groups](#), are dedicated to inclusion and connection. In these groups, a board-certified music therapist leads targeted music interventions to facilitate cross-generational interactions between young children, their parents, and older adults in memory care to stimulate reminiscence, engagement, and increased quality of life. Our other programs also include [low-cost developmental music groups](#) for babies, toddlers, and their caregivers, [free wellness drum circles](#), and [therapeutic summer programs](#) for neurodivergent children and their siblings. We are passionate about bringing the power of music to our home community here in Annapolis, and believe in offering accessible, high-quality therapeutic programs led by music therapists to all people.

In my own clinical work with neurodivergent children and adults with neurologic disorders here at AMT, I'm also honored to collaborate with my clients and their families to support their social, academic, and emotional growth through music-centered, improvisational music therapy encounters. I've personally witnessed the tears on a parent's face when their child sings their first words during a music therapy session. I've seen a teenager struggling with anxiety play their favorite song on the piano and experience feelings of success for the first time in their life. I've watched a student in the public schools make so much progress on their academic goals given music therapy supports that they were able to move from a self-contained classroom to an inclusive educational setting with their same-age, neurotypical peers. I've [written an original song](#) with a couple facing a terminal illness, and experienced how that process helped them process complex emotions, make meaning of their greatest challenge, and grow closer together.

In light of this, I ask you to please support [SB766], which will create a Music Therapist Advisory Committee within the State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists for music therapy licensure. This bill is needed:

TO PROTECT Maryland residents by ensuring that all individuals calling themselves music therapists in our state meet national standards for education, clinical training, certification, and continuing education;

TO IMPROVE access to music therapy services for Maryland residents by allowing institutions who require state recognition to provide those services; and

TO ADDRESS the confusion for healthcare facilities and Maryland residents regarding the difference between music therapists, music practitioners, music thanantologists, and other non-music therapy musicians in healthcare, such as speech-language pathologist.

A state license will provide employers with personnel who are trained, equipped, and held to high standards of ethics and professional practice, and who demonstrate competency through board certification and continuing education activities. Please consider supporting the establishment of a licensure by voting YES for [SB766].

Sincerely,

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