

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

My name is James Arthur Tolbert, II and I am a Software Engineer working at MITRE who is a resident of Maryland. While participating in my dance hobby, I was able to befriend a board certified music therapist and have been impressed with the clinical impact that music therapy has on the lives of the patients that they serve. I am writing in support of [HB1102], to create a Music Therapist Advisory Committee within the State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists for music therapy licensure in Maryland.

Through our friendship, I learned about what a music therapist does in order to help patients with their mental health. It gave me an understanding that music therapist needs to understand the music and instruments they choose for their patients because it affects the mental health of their patient. This enormous responsibility of credential music therapist should be recognized for their work and be respected just as other allied professions such as, psychology, physical therapy, and occupational therapy.

I believe that the establishment of music therapy licensure in Maryland will help ensure that the patients at Maryland mental health facilities receive quality music therapy services. The difference between a board certified music therapist, with the credential MT-BC, vs. an individual claiming to be a “music therapist” who does not have the training and experience of being supervised in a treatment setting can be detrimental to the progress and growth of patients. It is vital to all residents and consumers of healthcare in Maryland that this level of quality be assured through the creation of music therapy licensure.

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,

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