

Testimony: Kathy Cochran
Registered Pharmacist

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Health and Government Operations Committee

HB 1102- Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists- Music Therapists Act

My name is Kathy Cochran. I am the mother of a 14 year old autistic son, Joshua, a wife of a retired serviceman, and a Maryland licensed Registered Pharmacist. In Joshua's short lifetime, he has spent thousands of hours in behavioral, occupational, speech, physical, psychological and music therapy. Each therapy provided differing techniques with one common goal, rewiring his brain. Unlike the other therapies I listed, music has been able to reach different parts of the brain, making it an integral part of early intervention. Today, I am happy to report that Joshua has developed from a nonverbal toddler with many developmental delays to a high functioning teen who is main-streamed into the public-school system. He has straight A's, is in many social clubs and just won the lead part in his musical theater production of Aladdin. Music therapy has been a major contributor to my son's success and has gained my respect as a fellow medical professional.

As a Registered Pharmacist who did not have to get a master's degree, I am considered an expert in my field. Music Therapists work with the most vulnerable of society and should be licensed in Maryland to maintain a level of continuity of care. This ensures safety for the Music Therapists as well as their patients. This is what they, as a profession, are asking for: A recognized standard that all will have to maintain.

A Maryland state license is also critical for patient insurance coverage assistance. Contrary to what the other side will tell you, I have personally spent hours and hours over the years trying to get my son's therapy covered. Our insurance company said that they would only cover Music Therapy sessions if the therapist had a state license. So, for 10 years, we have been paying thousands of dollars for our son to have Music Therapy. Not everyone in your districts have the ability to pay for Music Therapy. Not having a licensure through the state is a true roadblock for those who need Music Therapy the most. It's time this roadblock is removed and allow music therapists to be acknowledged and officially recognized by the state of Maryland.