

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

My name is Nadine Wobus and I am a Board Certified Music Therapist working in Maryland. At my private music studio in Bowie, I currently serve four clients on the Autism Spectrum and one senior citizen with multiple challenges. In my private practice over the past 36 years, and in schools and other facilities for 40+ years, I have worked with clients aged 3 to 103 with a wide variety of physical, cognitive, and social/emotional challenges. In the schools and other facilities, I have worked with clients mostly in small and large groups; in my studio, I work with clients individually. My overall goal with each client is to increase his/her self-confidence and self-esteem and improve his/her quality of life. I also set short and long-term goals depending on each client's specific needs and talents. For example, many of my clients on the Autism Spectrum have difficulty expressing their feelings in ways that are socially acceptable. They lack the social skills and the ability to express verbally what they need. Music provides a language which they are able to process and through which they are able to communicate. Using instruments, vocalizations, and movement, they can establish a relationship with me and with others, and feel good about themselves. Some of my clients scream or hit or "act out" in other ways to get attention. However, using drums, the keyboard, or chanting, we make music together, we communicate non-verbally and verbally as they are able, and ultimately establish a bond which is "harmonious" and loving.

I ask you to please support [HB1102], 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 [HB1102].

Sincerely,

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