



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

February 4, 2026

House Bill 7

State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists - Authority to Issue Limited Licenses to Practice Music Therapy House Health Committee

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

House Bill 7 authorizes the State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists to issue a limited license to practice music therapy; providing the purpose of the limited license is to permit an individual to practice music therapy while completing certain licensing requirements; and allowing a licensee with a limited license to practice music therapy under the supervision of a fully licensed music therapist.

Establishing a limited license for music therapy allows qualified applicants to begin practicing under supervision while completing full licensure requirements, increasing the number of trained music therapists available to serve community needs.¹ This pathway removes unnecessary delays in workforce entry while maintaining professional oversight, ensuring safe and effective care. For individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities—who often face long waitlists and limited access to specialized therapies—this expanded workforce is critical.

Music therapy offers individualized, evidence-based interventions that support communication, emotional regulation, cognitive development, and sensory integration.² For individuals with limited verbal abilities, music provides a dignified and effective means of expression and connection. Structured activities such as listening, singing, instrument play, and relaxation

¹ <https://utahparentcenter.org/music-therapy-benefits/>

² <https://www.samitivejhospitals.com/article/detail/music-therapy-development-communication-support>

techniques are tailored to each person's strengths and challenges, supporting emotional, psychological, and social well-being.

By allowing supervised practice through a limited license, the State promotes equitable access to life-enhancing therapeutic services while upholding high professional standards. This approach affirms the dignity of every person by recognizing their right to timely, appropriate care—particularly for individuals with intellectual disabilities who benefit profoundly from consistent, personalized therapeutic support.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for a favorable report on **HB 7**.

Thank you for your consideration.