

American Music Therapy Association

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Certification Board for Music Therapists

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January 20, 2021

Re: HSB 61

Dear Members of the State Government Subcommittee for HSB 61:

My name is Dr. Kimberly Sena Moore and I am the Regulatory Affairs Associate for the Certification Board for Music Therapists. On behalf of the national government relations team from the Certification Board for Music Therapists and the American Music Therapy Association, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HSB 61. This bill offers title protection for music therapy, and as such provides a fiscally responsible way to help remove barriers to music therapy services by qualified professionals in the state of Iowa.

Officially recognizing music therapy through title protection will protect consumers in Iowa by limiting the potential for harm to citizens through ensuring that only those who are *qualified* can call themselves “music therapists” or say they offer “music therapy.” This would create channels for access while also allowing employers, potential employers, and private citizens to feel confident in the training and education of the music therapists they employ to work with their loved ones. Importantly, recognizing existing music therapy qualifications ensure this level of protection without increasing the state’s financial burden during these challenging economic times.

Despite the numerous health, economic, and social challenges of the previous year, music therapy remains an essential service for clients, family members, and healthcare providers as they navigate myriad challenges. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, music therapists have adapted the delivery of their services and diversified service options to meet emerging needs of clients, family members, and healthcare providers. In addition, music therapy interventions are frequently considered when identifying potential pandemic-related treatment and support services for consumers and healthcare professionals.


In response to a national survey sent to music therapists in June 2020, almost two-thirds of respondents indicated they have added telepractice as a service delivery option, the vast majority of which are live virtual music therapy sessions. This has not only allowed for continuity of services, it has also enhanced therapeutic outcomes and improved family involvement in their loved ones’ progress. The majority of survey respondents (75%) agree that clients are responding positively to telepractice music therapy services; in fact, some report that certain clients are thriving in ways that did not happen when seen in person. Many respondents also noted that family members are more involved during sessions, so can witness the work and change that occurs when clients are engaged in music therapy.

Survey respondents also indicated benefits for healthcare providers as well. Music therapists are supporting their coworkers in in-patient and residential settings such as hospitals and long-term care

facilities. These colleagues express joy and gratitude for the connections made through shared musical experiences during a period of increased isolation and stress.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill, which will create access to a beneficial therapeutic service for some of Iowa's most vulnerable citizens.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kimberly". The signature is stylized with a large, looped initial "K" and a trailing flourish.

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