

Submitter: Steve Marick  
On Behalf Of: Art Therapists  
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3761

Representative Thuy Tran  
900 Court St NE,  
H-285  
Salem, Oregon 97301

March 17, 2025

Re: HB 3761 Art Therapy Insurance Reimbursement

Representative Tran,

I am writing to express my support of House Bill 3761 which requires the Oregon Health Authority and coordinated care organizations to provide reimbursement in the state's medical assistance program for the cost of behavioral health services provided by licensed art therapists, licensed certified art therapists and provisional licensed art therapists.

This legislation is important because it expands access to therapeutic mental health services, providing access to care for the 1.4 million Oregon Medicaid recipients, addressing disparities in care for low-income and underserved communities. Art therapists are trained both in art and psychological theory, on par with other mental health clinicians. The entry to practice requires a Master's degree in Art Therapy, two-years of supervised clinical practice, and passing a board certification exam. This legislation aligns Oregon with the 13 other states that recognize art therapists as qualified mental health providers and it expands the workforce by providing more mental health providers for clients to access services.

I have worked directly with Art Therapists at the Oregon State Hospital and their work with patients with Mental Illness has been able to connect with patients in ways normal therapy has not worked. Patients have been able to learn coping skills through Art Therapy and have found a format to express themselves positively. Art Therapy has reduced aggressive behaviors in patients and has provided a format for them to learn skills they can use when they leave the hospital. Without our Art Therapists, we would not have another avenue in support our patients.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Steve Marick, LCSW  
Psychiatric Social Worker  
Oregon State Hospital