

Submitter: Everette Corbett
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3761

Hello,

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.

Personally, art has been fundamental in my own therapy work. Art has a unique ability to speak to the human experience in ways where language often falls short. The mental health crisis in Oregon needs all of the help it can get. Nothing works for everyone, so it's important to have options. Art therapy can provide a different way of processing experiences, adding a much needed tool to the box. By supporting this legislative initiative, we can expand access to care for the individuals that need it most.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Kindly,
Everette Corbett
Art Therapy Student