

Submitter: Liv Craine  
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care  
Measure, Appointments or Topic: HB 3760, HB 3761

I am writing in support of HB 3760, which requires the Oregon Health Authority to reimburse licensed certified art therapists and provisionally licensed art therapists for behavioral health services under the state's medical assistance program. Additionally, the bill will bring credibility and recognition to an established behavioral health care practice critical in providing healing to individuals with complex, trauma-induced behavioral health issues.

The Oregon Licensed Certified Art Therapist (LCAT) credential is still relatively new and has not yet been recognized as a billable license under Medicaid. There are 1.4 million Oregon Medicaid recipients, many of whom come from low-income and underserved communities.

As an intern at the Domestic Violence Resource Center in Beaverton, Oregon, I've witnessed firsthand what art therapy can do for those who have suffered interpersonal violence on all levels. This legislation would expand access to therapeutic mental health services across the state to those who need it most.

The practice of art therapy has shown extensive and integrative change within several clients' journeys, individually and within a group setting. I have seen individual clients enhance their coping skills, tolerance, have increased expression, foster insight, and create a deeper sense of self and meaning. For trauma processing, artmaking is a nonverbal way to begin redefining narratives and their storytelling. Part of the Neurobiology behind traumatic symptomatology is linked to the right hemisphere of the brain, our creative, nonverbal, and sensory side. Artmaking is a deep way to access parts of the brain that verbal processing cannot effectively open.

The entry to practice requires a Master's degree in Art Therapy, two years of supervised clinical practice, and passing a board certification exam. The bill will continue to establish the existing supervised, provisional license for newly graduated master's level art therapists.

House Bill 3760 will reduce administrative costs for the state licensing boards: Mental Health and Addiction Certification Board of Oregon, Oregon Board of Licensed Professional Counselors and Therapists, and Oregon Health Licensing Office, which all currently oversee similar aspects of licensing needed by art therapists in Oregon. This aligns with processes used by other Oregon behavioral health providers, such as professional counselors, marriage and family therapists, and clinical social workers.

Art therapy is a critical tool therapists can use to help patients work through trauma in ways conventional psychotherapy practice and theories can't. Art therapists are trained both in art and psychological theory, on par with other mental health clinicians. Art therapists, including myself, provide trauma-informed care that enhances emotional resilience, supports healing, and improves mental health outcomes.

I will be graduating with a Master's Degree in Art Therapy from Lewis and Clark's Graduate School of Education and Counseling in May of this year. Your support of House Bill 3761 will help to reduce redundancy for new graduates such as myself to no longer need to hold multiple license types to practice as an art therapist and to receive insurance reimbursement. 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 urge you to support this bill for the ongoing care of our communities, the growing field, and for the ethical grounds of psychology.

Sincerely,

Liv Craine  
Graduate Art Therapy Student  
Lewis and Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling