

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

Letter of support for HB 3761 Art Therapy Insurance Reimbursement

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.

Not only will this bill open opportunities to address mental health care shortages, but it will also make access to art therapy and mental health services more affordable, equitable, and accessible to all Oregonians!