

HB2796 Testimony
Jodi Winnwalker, LCSW, MT-BC
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Good afternoon, Chair Greenlick and committee members. Thank you so much for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2796, legislation to support licensure for board certified music therapists in Oregon. I also wish to thank Representative Julie Parrish for sponsoring this bill and for the many state senators and representatives who are providing their support and encouragement.

My name is Jodi Winnwalker. I have the honor of serving as chair of the Oregon Music Therapy Government Relations Task Force. We are a group of seven Oregon board certified music therapists working in close collaboration with our American Music Therapy Association and the Certification Board for Music Therapists to support state recognition for board certified music therapists.

I am also a licensed clinical social worker, board certified music therapist and founder/CEO of a woman owned business, Earthtones Music Therapy Services, LLC. I have been practicing as a music therapist in Oregon since 1982 (33 years). Earthtones was founded in 1996 and now employs 12 board certified music therapists to provide services to some of our most vulnerable Oregon citizens, including children and adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities, older adults living with Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's disease or in need of assisted living due to physical and neurological challenges, returning veterans, and people of all ages in hospice care.

The level of services provided by our therapists has increased due to demand. However, my heart aches when I think of and witness the number of individuals who have asked for music therapy services, yet, have no access due to lack of funding and state restrictions.

For example, the state of Oregon has wonderful Brokerage Services that are designed to help adults and families assess needs, understand the process of selecting services and make informed choices to meet unique goals. Service agents have backgrounds in support services, case management, foster care, and mental health services. This experience allows them to provide quality disability-related support, informed direction and encouragement. The agents take the time to understand each person's life goals and interests, and the level of assistance

they need to live life to the fullest. The personal agents provide focused supports, such as:

- Helping to identify the individual's goals
- Developing and monitoring Individualized Support Plans (ISPs)
- Identifying familial supports, as well as services in the community
- Helping to choose a direction that fulfills the goals of the ISP
- Choosing effective supports based on service eligibility
- Negotiating rates and services with chosen providers
- Monitoring supports for quality on an ongoing basis

Unfortunately, although many families have requested music therapy services through this system over the years, funding has been denied because music therapy is not recognized as a viable and fundable service. When attempting to coordinate with the agencies, I was asked to specifically not use the term “music therapy” in progress notes. At one time, I was asked not to reference the word “music”.

As a result, we have elected to offer out of pocket services to these clients at significantly discounted rates or pro bono. The need is great.

People, including myself, choose to enter the professional field of music therapy for many reasons. Three top three reasons are:

- 1) The individual has experienced the power of music in their own lives.
- 2) The individual seeks to understand how and why music impacts us and how it can be harnessed/channeled to promote cognitive, emotional, physical, social and spiritual health.
- 3) The individual seeks to be of service to others.

This is a powerful combination and thus the research-based field of music therapy exists worldwide!

Oregonians who have had access to music therapy services over the years have shared:

Family Members

“Music therapy is such a gift for our mother during her trials with Alzheimers. When Liska comes, Mother lights up, sings with gusto, and has an experience of

true joy! She is the happiest I have ever seen her, and her music therapy sessions have been an essential key to that happiness."

Ann (Daughter)

"Jodi Winnwalker and Earthtones Music Therapy Services have enhanced and improved the world of my sister Molly Jo Daly and likewise improved conditions in her entire group home in Hillsboro, Oregon. Music therapy has changed the way Molly communicates and behaves. Most importantly, music therapy has provided another avenue for Molly and me to communicate together and the joy we have making music as brother and sister is difficult to describe. As Molly's brother and guardian, I wholeheartedly endorse Earthtones with Jodi and her absolutely wonderful staff."

Jeff Daly (www.wheresmolly.net) Brother

Program Managers

"I have found Earthtones staff to be knowledgeable, professional, and to consistently interact well with clients and staff. Music therapy enriches our program and allows us to offer an adjunct to our traditional mental health services. A word to fiduciaries--If music therapy is a medium that would reach your client, this is an excellent use of client funds!"

Terri-lynn McDonald, Program Supervisor
Enhanced Care Facility at Premier Living
Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare

Social Workers/Case Managers

As owner of a Care Management company, I have had the privilege of working with Earthtones for several years and I have found them to be highly professional and reliable. Our clients present with a wide variety of needs and abilities and the music therapists have done wonderful work with them. It has been gratifying to watch the lives of our clients improve significantly through this service. I would recommend them without hesitation."

Debra Moser, Owner
Whole Life Services

"I have had the opportunity on numerous occasions to witness the interaction between therapists and clients, and have seen firsthand the wonderful impact of these sessions. Clients who are otherwise withdrawn and uncommunicative come alive during music therapy. Not being musical myself, I am in awe of the talent of these therapists, both musically and therapeutically. I would not hesitate to recommend Earthtones to all guardians and case managers for a great quality of life benefit."

Niki Tucker, MSW
Social Work Services

"One of my clients took part in music therapy and became more alert and engaging with others, less obsessed and more pleasant in mood over the course of a few months. I would gladly refer any client such as this one for music therapy. I would also gladly refer other clients whose ability to self-express or communicate is impaired. Good work Jodi!!!!"

Simon B. Paquette, MSSW, LCSW, RC
Medical Social Work Services

Guardians/Fiduciaries

"Thank you for all the magic that comes with the music that you and your associates bring to our clients. The physical movement, socialization, cognitive stimulus, and feelings of well being are gifts beyond measure. Earthtones is a community treasure!"

Nancy Doty, Registered Guardian – NGF
Certified Oregon Professional Fiduciary

"Our office has found Earthtones Music Therapy a cost effective means of enhancing our client's quality of life. We often see a reduction in collateral costs for dealing with medical and behavioral challenges when implementing care plans that include music therapy."

Kevin Burke, Registered Guardian
Beagle, Burke & Assoc. of OR

It is my hope that this testimony has been compelling and that you are, indeed, touched by the powerful impact music therapy can have in people's lives. I also invite you to contact a local music therapist and make arrangements to join in on a group session with older adults as their eyes light up, hearts sing and arms move in musical rhythm. Or, perhaps, you could witness the world of child open up!

Thank you,

Jodi Winnwalker