

April 26, 2025

Testimony in Support of HB 3761: Art Therapy Insurance Reimbursement
Senate Committee on Health Care

To: Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, Sen Campos, Sen Linthicum, and Sen Reynolds

I am a graduate of Lewis and Clark's Art Therapy program and a current ATR-P, QMHP-R, and Professional Counselor Associate in Portland, Oregon. I have personally been affected by this issue and am writing to express my support of House Bill 3761. Currently, I work at a community-based integrated mental health setting serving adults with SPMI, many of whom are enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan.

Your support of House Bill 3761 will help to reduce redundancies, streamline processes, reduce administrative costs, and increase mental health services that are accessible and trauma-informed. This legislation would expand access to therapeutic mental health services for Oregonians and empower a growing workforce of mental health professionals. By supporting HB 3761, you are reducing barriers for mental health professionals like me and increasing access to essential mental health care for the residents of Oregon.

Art therapists' training is comparable to other mental health training with equivalent coursework, ethical practice, clinical supervision, and passing a board certification exam. As the Oregon Licensed Certified Art Therapist license is relatively new, recognition of the license as billable by Medicaid has not yet been established. This restricts low-income and underserved communities' access to these essential services.

I pursued the profession of art therapy to share trauma and culturally informed interventions that are effective at supporting individual and communal mental health. From integrated health centers, shelters, school-based and day treatment programs, to outpatient settings, I have personally witnessed the transformative power of art therapy. Due to its emphasis on the creative process and somatic engagement, art therapy can reach clients who struggle to engage in traditional talk therapy.

I urge you to pass House Bill 3761 to make art therapy accessible to all Oregonians, regardless of income, background, or diagnosis.

I appreciate your time and vote to pass such an important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

Kai Carli
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Mental Health Clinician, New Narrative