

Submitter: Lyubov Gonina
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3761

Testimony in Support of HB 3761

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 3761, which would allow the Health Licensing Office to issue provisional licenses to qualified art therapy applicants.

As an art therapist with 14 years of experience working primarily with immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of art therapy for marginalized communities. Throughout my career, I have incorporated traditional art forms from clients' cultures of origin to help strengthen their cultural identity during times of profound transition and trauma.

The ability to engage with familiar artistic traditions provides my clients with a crucial bridge between their past and present circumstances. For many individuals who have experienced displacement, language barriers, and cultural disorientation, traditional art forms offer a non-verbal means of expression when words fail. This approach has proven especially effective when working with individuals processing trauma, grief, and the complex emotions associated with migration.

I have also integrated American art forms and cultural events into my therapeutic approach, including indigenous Native American art traditions, to support the integration process and help clients develop connections to their new American identity. This dual approach—honoring both original cultural heritage and new cultural experiences—creates a therapeutic space where clients can explore their evolving identities and find belonging in their new communities.

Currently, the lack of a provisional licensing pathway creates unnecessary barriers for qualified professionals seeking to serve vulnerable populations. This bill would allow trained art therapists to begin practicing under appropriate supervision while completing any additional requirements for full licensure. This measure is particularly important for addressing the critical shortage of culturally responsive mental health services.

The communities I serve have unique mental health needs that require specialized approaches. Art therapy that honors cultural traditions helps rebuild a sense of identity and belonging that is often fractured during migration.

Without adequate access to such culturally informed care, many individuals struggle to integrate their experiences and establish wellbeing in their new homes.

I urge you to support HB 3761 and help increase access to quality mental health services for our most vulnerable community members. This bill represents an important step toward creating a more inclusive, responsive healthcare system that

recognizes the diverse needs of all Oregonians.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Lyubov Gonina, MA, NCC, ATR-BC, LPC, LCAT

GoniNaLyubov Therapeutic Services LLC, Owner, Supervisor, Clinician/Art Therapist

Ukrainian Alliance, Board Member