

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Public Health  
For HB 667

Compiled on: Monday, April 3, 2023 6:00 PM

Note: Comments received by the committee reflect only the view of the individual(s) submitting the comment, who retain sole responsibility for the content of the comment. Neither the committee nor the Texas House of Representatives takes a position on the views expressed in any comment. The committee compiles the comments received for informational purposes only and does not exercise any editorial control over comments.

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Hearing Date: April 3, 2023 9:00 AM

RICHARD VENIER

self

FRIENDSWOOD, TX

Opposed. This is just another opportunity to collect licensing fees for another agency. Anyone with a music educational background can minister help with music. I know from my own experience that these licenses are skirted around anyway.

Naomi Olivares

none

Orange Grove, TX

If a person graduates from a training program for a certain career choice, no licensing should be required. Passing the coursework and comprehensive exam at the program, especially if the program is has an oversight board should be authority enough to practice in the field. In addition, the government is overstepping its bounds by hindering a person from making a living in the field that they are trained. The grades in the classroom are sufficient evidence of aptitude in the area.

Shawn Crump

Self, music therapist

Frisco, TX

The MT-BC, our board certification to practice music therapy, is recognized and protected by 15 states, and has held national recognition among professionals for many years before that. However, the lack of state recognition in Texas leads to several problems, including limited access for people who could benefit from music therapy due to legal restrictions and insurance barriers. By recognizing the MT-BC as an accredited license similar to speech therapy or physical therapy, many Texans who previously have been denied music therapy will be granted the access they deserve.

nobuyuki shiraishi

ECISD (Ector County ISD)

Odessa, TX

I am still hearing rumors that people who are not national board-certified for music therapy are practicing "music therapeutic" activities. We, as MT-BC, have obligations to protect consumers and the future of music therapy, and the licensing and regulation of music therapists is crucial more than ever. Please hear out stories by our representatives and understand the situations.

Sincerely,

Majesca Wong  
Houston Methodist  
Houston, TX

Dear Legislator,

I am writing to voice my support for HB 667. It is vital for music therapists to maintain licensure to protect patients, clients, and the greater community from harm that may be caused by the misrepresentation of the clinical work music therapists do by non-licensed or non-certified professionals. Music therapy can lead to incredible shifts in physiologic, cognitive, mental, and emotional health and should only be administered by clinically trained music therapists who understand the potential for benefit, but also the potential for harm that music can have if not administered ethically.

Thank you  
Majesca Wong

Sarah Rossi  
Self  
Sugar Land, TX

3/31/23

Dear Legislator,

I am a board-certified music therapist working in a hospital on an oncology unit in Houston, TX. I am writing this letter to indicate my support of the music therapists in Texas as they seek the creation of a music therapy LICENSURE. This state recognition of the music therapy profession will help ensure that consumers in our state have access to music therapy services provided by a qualified practitioner. It will serve to both protect the public and increase their ability to choose and access healthcare services that best meets their needs. For this reason, I ask that you please support HB 667.

In my experience music therapy has a positive impact on cancer patients by aiding in reducing a patient's anxiety through the process of therapeutic songwriting to aid them in processing emotions related to their treatment journey. Music therapy can also be integrated into procedural support as I regularly co-treat alongside nurses during procedures such as a blood draw where I provide live music assisted diaphragmatic breathing to promote muscled relaxation & enhance a patient ability to cope during a procedure while decreasing their perception of pain during vascular access. These are just a few examples of the many ways in which a board-certified music therapist can support a patient throughout their treatment journey while supporting healthcare staff in their work of providing the best quality of care for a patient. I also provide music therapy-based staff support for healthcare workers to aid them in promoting a positive association with their work environment, elevating their mood, enhancing team building, & promoting emotional expression through interventions such as music making, instrumental play, & collaborative goal-oriented playlist creation.

Like any skilled and trained professional, music therapists need to have state recognition of their profession and credential to ensure quality service delivery among its practitioners. Please consider supporting the establishment and maintenance of a license for music therapists in Texas by supporting HB 667.

Sincerely,

Sarah Lynn Rossi, MM, MT-BC  
Board Certified Music Therapist  
Srossi.mtbc@gmail.com

Valerie McGilvrey  
Self  
Spring, TX

There's absolutely no reason to create a license with a fee for this occupation. Musicians need not be encumbered with meaningless regulation. Don't pass this!!

Melissa Melo, Music therapist

Music Therapy

Stafford, TX

As a music therapist who has been practicing for 10 years both in New York and in Texas, I see how impactful and important our work is. Currently, I work at MD Anderson Cancer Center, where I work with pediatric cancer patients on safeguarding and supporting them through their treatment. There are so many instances daily where I am utilizing my in depth clinical training to process, validate, and support their psychosocial health. Music therapy plays a large role in their health journey and many times we become their comfort. I have the honor to also work with many patients and their families during end of life in my position and music is such a powerful tool, that a board certified music therapist has to be the person to lead these families through their heavy emotions. Music therapy is a valued healthcare profession and should be recognized as so in Texas, where there is one of the largest number of music therapists in the country.

Jocelyn Guadamuz

Self representing music therapy

Newark, TX

Hello! I am currently a dual trained music therapist. I am a Licensed Professional Counselor as well (LPC). As part of my experience, I've had the ability to offer services to many Texans with mental health struggles. Part of my experience has also been working in the schools. I will say from these experiences, there is certainly a crisis in our state. Our kiddos in the system are struggling more than ever due to COVID and mental health. Sometimes it feels as though there's only so much we can do as clinicians. Many places have lacked in being able to provide support for their clients and even staff due to a shortage of music therapists and mental health professionals. I am currently placed at a mental health center for families in the schools. Services are grant funded through the school district. By January 2023, we had a waitlist of about 50 students that needed access to mental health services. We had to refer them out since every clinician (including myself) was booked up. Many of my former clients and families have reported struggles in finding affordable and accessible services. It has been a hard journey. I believe by supporting BH 667, we are able to create more opportunities to increase access to those in need. We would be able to serve more Texans, especially in a time when resources are limited due to the mental health crisis in our state. Many individuals are unable to access the services they need- either due to finances or a shortage of professionals. We need to do our part by allowing music therapists to practice with a licensure to increase access and visibility with organizations.

Dorothy Schaettle

Southwest Region of the American Music Therapy Association (SWAMTA)

Houston, TX

My name is Dorothy Schaettle, and I am a board-certified music therapist. I encourage you to support this bill. Music Therapy is a complimentary health care field. This bill will help expand access to music therapy services to those who need it, as well as ensure that people with the title "music therapist", providing music therapy services, have the proper training in this field. While everyone thinks of music as entertaining and fun, it is a field with much published clinical evidence which shows that music can have an impact on physical and mental health. Please help clients and patients by passing this bill. Help them by ensuring that a license is required to practice, and ensure that only those people with the necessary training and experience are calling themselves music therapists. We wish to protect the health and well-being of all Texans. Thank you for your consideration of HB 667.

Theresa Hart

Self, music therapist

Pearland, TX

Hello, I am a music therapist in the state of Texas. I live in Pearland, TX and work in Houston, TX. I work in a school district, so the persons I treat are all children from the ages of 3 to 22. All my students are enrolled in special education and I provide interventions that help them make progress in the areas of academics, motor skills, communication/language, behavior and social interaction. It is in the best interest of my students that those who provide music therapy for the citizens of Texas are board certified and licensed in the state of Texas. For this reason, I am in support of House Bill 667. The occupational licensing and regulation of music therapists, will ensure that the most vulnerable citizens will be provided with the best therapeutic interventions by a music therapist who has been trained and board certified. This bill will also prevent those who have not been trained from providing music therapy in the state.

Molly Hedgpeth, MT-BC

Music Therapy

Joshua, TX

Hi!

I am a board certified music therapist and also a speech and language pathologist. Please consider voting to require state licensure for music therapy in the State of Texas. We attend accredited music therapy programs. My bachelors degree took 6 years because we study music, therapy, and music therapy. We also have a year long internship to complete for our national boards. We have a full body of research. Please give this profession the respect it deserves. Please help us obtain state licensure to increase reimbursement from insurance. Please ensure that Music Therapy is a valid profession and meaningful intervention for individuals with disabilities. As someone who is also a speech therapist, I can 100% verify that many of the patients with the most severe disabilities are often denied services because of their "lack of benefit" from speech therapy. Music therapy can serve these individuals as Music can transcend the barriers of basic communication and movement. Thank you for your time!

I was given the opportunity to testify for HB 1745 last week in person. I also saw you guys on TikTok recently for the Trans Bill. Your professionalism was en pointe! Thank you for serving the Lone Star State.

Hannah-Joy Mach

Self, Board Certified Music Therapist

Sugar Land, TX

Hello,

My name is Hannah-Joy Mach and I am a Board Certified Music Therapist (MT-BC). This bill is important to protect the public and ensure quality care of music therapy. I have encountered people providing "music therapy" as "music therapists" when they are not certified which can result in harm and confusion to those receiving care. As a MT-BC I have received in depth training in therapeutic skills/ music skills and how to work with a variety of populations effectively that is backed up by scientific evidence. There are set standards we must adhere to and MT-BCs are required to have a bachelor's degree, 1200hrs clinical training, pass a certification exam and complete continued education courses. This would not ban live musicians from entering spaces, but merely ensure those who receive music therapy actually are.

Thank you,

Hannah-Joy Mach, MT-BC

Chris Lippke

Self - Music Therapist

Austin, TX

I am writing in support of HB 667. I have been a Board-Certified Music Therapist for ten years, and have been working with the Texas State Task Force for the past six years. Passing this legislation would not only be beneficial for Music Therapists practicing in the state, but more importantly, it would help thousands of individuals who could benefit from receiving music therapy services. Having state licensure would increase access for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, individuals receiving medical care, individuals with mental health concerns, individuals with Alzheimer's or dementia, and so many more. For Music Therapists, it would help protect our credential (which in turn protects those we serve); it would help increase coverage under more insurance plans (which in turn helps those we serve); and would increase employment opportunities for many music therapists (which in turn increases access for those we serve). Many other health care professions require licensure in order to practice, and Music Therapy should be no different. Passing this legislation would greatly benefit both Music Therapists and a wide variety of Texans who could benefit from expanded and increased access to our services. Thank you sincerely for your time and consideration.

Patrick Lopez

Kate Harrison and Rep. Ann Johnson

Conroe, TX

Subj: Music Therapist Benefits ISO HB667

Thank you for allowing me to explain how therapy through music has improved my life. As a career Special Operator, my duties were vast and ranged from questioning some of the most sought-after villains around the world to administering life-saving medical aid for people foreign and domestic. I thought it to be pervious to the situation at hand for contextual support to be afforded to you. As I've already submitted a statement about why properly trained music therapists are needed, I found it necessary to elaborate further on how this therapeutic intervention helped change the course of my life by speaking my truth through the below-referenced impact statement.

During my in-patient visit to Walter Reed Hospital for Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) diagnosis and treatment, one of the leading TBI doctors explained brain bandwidth to me. For example, imagine a long-time friend you didn't expect to see asking to grab a cup of coffee. Your first impulse may sound like this "Yes, make it happen". Your mental logic may react with, "No way, wave off, too much, overload, break contact, threat encountered, impossible to fit in". Now what? You know other engagements supersede this request. Naturally, you say, "Sure, when and where?" Now the logistical gymnastics begin, making it all work as if this is my next op, never saying no. This meeting with another warrior where comparing notes is second nature and the hopes of a new discovery keep you moving forward. This type of interaction helps the landscape of connectivity and improves troop morale downrange and on the home front. We all hope for a small piece of life, a pearl of wisdom, that may help us find ourselves again, save our marriages and families, and better yet, our lives.

"She's just a good little girl, happy all the time, she's just a Lily Bear" is a song I created during music therapy about my service dog. I sing this when I get overwhelmed. Furthermore, I play this on my harp to center and focus on myself. I learned how to cope with triggers, stressful environments, and daily tasks, all through music therapy. Music therapy has helped me to be present, enjoy life, and smile. I tell myself it's okay to not make every moment pass or fail, life or death, all or nothing. With music therapy I enjoy life, just listening and enjoying new habits that represent my new improved, collected, stable, and predictable well-being. Through music therapy, I have the tools to be a positive and healthy member of society. I love what this has done for me!

Wounded Warrior Project (WWP) has facilitated my music therapy and has continued to assist me with my ongoing recovery. Please support HB 667 in order to provide patient protection and qualified music therapists for the veteran community. Thank you you for listening to my testimony.

Very respectfully,

Patrick Lopez

U.S. Navy (SEAL, Ret.)

SEAL Delivery Vehicle Test Pilot

Montgomery County Veterans Memorial, Commissioner

Madeleine Stevens  
Self, Music Therapist  
Carrollton, TX

Dear Ms. Johnson,

My name is Madeleine Stevens and I have been practicing as a certified music therapist in north Texas for almost 3 years. During this time, I have had the chance to work with hundreds of children with varying disabilities and their families. Currently, I work among other health care professionals at an out-patient clinic serving neurodivergent children and their families.

Being recognized by the state of Texas as a licensed medical professional would allow me and hundreds of other music therapists the opportunity to do the following (and more):

1. Provide regulated care that protects Texas citizens from potential harm
2. Be recognized by more insurance companies for a wider range of diagnoses and treatment plans and create more access to music therapy for Texas citizens
3. Hold ourselves to our code of ethics and continuing education to ensure our clients receive excellent care and prevent undue harm from trained professionals

I fully support HB 667 and thank you and the other committee members for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Madeleine Stevens, MMT, MT-BC

Eric Kunish, Chair  
National Alliance on Mental Illness-Central Texas Affiliate  
Austin, TX

I support this bill!

Sophia Vignovich  
self - board certified music therapist  
Bowie, TX

I strongly agree that the State of Texas would highly benefit from the passage of this bill. As a recent employee of Health and Human Services, I have personally witnessed the need for music therapy among the disabled populations. There is a heightened lack of access to music therapy services due to the lack of insurance funding available. The passage of this bill, allowing the licensing and regulation of music therapists, would likely increase the amount of insurance providers who acknowledge and fund these services. Those already receiving services have shown to improve their abilities and progress in other healthcare disciplines. Therefore, the passage of this bill would not only influence wider accessibility and funding, but also likely increase prognosis among many receiving related services.

Tara Jenkins  
Harmony in Dementia  
Cedar Park, TX

I am a board certified music therapy practicing here in the greater Austin area and I am for this bill. This bill would provide state recognition for music therapists. It would also ensure that Texans receive safe and effective music therapy services from qualified professionals.

Jana Michelle Kennemer, Music Therapist

Self - music therapist

The Colony, TX

I would like to speak in support of this bill. I'm a board certified music therapist and I have been in practice for 25 years. I work in special education for a school district in my area. HB 667 would protect to citizens of Texas by insuring that they are receiving music therapy services from a board certified music therapist. Board Certified music therapists go through a rigorous college degree program, pass a nationally administered certification exam, and earn continuing education credits to keep that certification current. As it stands now, consumers in Texas do not have that protection. Many other states in our country have moved towards a license at the state level, it would be beneficial to both our clients and music therapists if we could do the same.

Magellan Taylor-Brickey

The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center

Fort Worth, TX

I support the need for licensure and regulation of music therapists. This will not only increase their credibility among the medical community, but ensure those with licensure are equipped to provide services within the ethical boundaries of their profession while receiving increased support from their governing body.

Kelly Howard

Kelly's Melodies Music Therapy

Pflugerville, TX

As a Texas Resident and Board Certified Music Therapist in the Pflugerville/Austin area, I would like to encourage the passing of HB667 in support of State Licensure to protect both Music Therapists and the clients we serve. Music Therapy requires a minimum 4 year degree with a 6 month internship as well as a National Board Certification exam to ensure the proper education and training of the therapist providing services. This is important because the therapist provides services in a safe and prescribed manner to address non-music goals of the client and/or patient considering medical, psychological, emotional, physical, and social factors. Please support the licensure requirements for Music Therapist in the State of Texas.

Thank you,

Kelly Howard, MT-BC

Christina Stock  
self, music therapist  
Richardson, TX

Chair Klick and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony related to HB 667. I graduated with my master's degree in music therapy and became board certified in 2009. I began my career in adult hospital settings in 2013 by serving patients in a large North Texas hospital's outpatient cancer center and recently transitioned to inpatient care. I now provide services in the cardiovascular and medical intensive care units.

I had the honor of serving families during the pandemic, including a healthy, middle-aged gentleman with COVID. He ended up spending a total of 9 months in our hospital in our CVICU on ECMO. When I introduced music therapy services to his wife, he was intubated and sedated in a medically-induced coma but I learned that they loved music and he played guitar. His love of music and my knowledge of how music effects the brain and the body led to several significant interactions during his hospitalization. One day I walked into his room when he was being weaned off of sedation, which led to physical and physiological manifestations of anxiety. His heart rate was through the roof, his blood pressure was too high, and his oxygen saturation was low. After 15-20 minutes of live patient preferred music, his heart rate and blood pressure had reduced to normal ranges, and his oxygen saturation increased significantly. I turned to the nurse and said, "What you gave him has kicked in now, yes?" and she replied, "I didn't give him anything. That was all music. Because of his length of stay, this patient benefitted from the full menu of music therapy interventions, including analyzing the lyrics to "Dos Oruguitas" from the movie "Encanto." The patient and his wife are from Colombia, where the movie is set, and the song talks about the miraculous transformation of caterpillars into butterflies. This song by Lin Manuel Miranda helped the family and I discuss and process the struggles, hardships, devastation and hope the family had felt throughout his COVID diagnosis and hospitalization in a way that felt familiar and comforting because of its lyrical content and familiar Latin music instrumentation, melody, and danceable beat. I am happy to report that this patient returned home, happily reintegrating into his life and community.

While no one would argue against the use of music by volunteers for entertainment and wellness, only properly educated music therapists possess the necessary clinical training, skills, and knowledge to design, implement, and evaluate the use of music to meet the specific needs of a patient. With HB 667, music therapists will secure licensure to protect our patients and provide them with the highest level of music therapy services.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Tara Kelley  
self  
Richardson, TX

Char Klick and Members of the Public Health Committee,

I was a 38-year-old mother and wife with a full time career when my cancer diagnosis came. I was determined to be strong and keep the world as normal as possible for my daughters who were 5 and 7 years old. While I have always considered myself adaptable and ready for a challenge, undergoing cancer treatment was incredibly overwhelming. It is a barrage of information, prescriptions, doctors' appointments, and scans combined with the sense of being utterly helpless. When I arrived for my first chemotherapy I had my fighter mentality in check and I was ready to kick cancer to the curb. As the treatments wore on, it became physically and mentally harder to prevail over my fearful thoughts about the future.

While all the services offered to me were beneficial during my outpatient cancer visits, the music therapy was the most transformative and meaningful of all. The first day the therapist came into my treatment room I considered it merely a welcome distraction to the nausea. And while it most definitely improved my nausea, each time the therapist came I found myself dealing with the trauma of my circumstances in a way that was easy, comfortable and therapeutic. My music therapist had a different exercise for us at each treatment; she used music that I enjoyed to create an environment conducive to sharing. It was a fun and lighthearted way to explore my feelings and emotions while also being deeply meaningful. In the end, we actually wrote a song together which has become a lasting treasure to my family.

A music therapy program, in my opinion, is what makes a patient's experience exceptional instead of tolerable. The opportunity to improve mental health in a non-threatening environment where patients can be almost unaware of the therapy occurring has the potential to be truly transformational.

I wholeheartedly support the licensure of music therapists through HB 667 in hopes that others may benefit as I did.

Sincerely,  
Tara Kelley  
Hodgkin's Lymphoma Survivor 2015

Elizabeth Rogers, MT-BC  
Texas State Task Force for music therapy  
La Marque, TX

I am a board-certified music therapist in Texas, and I heartily encourage the legislature to pass this bill, in order to protect the public. Our training is excellent and worthy of licensure in this state. Thank you.

Brittany Trinite  
Self: Music Therapist  
Round rock, TX

My name is Brittany Trinité and I'm a board certified music therapist. I'm for state music therapy licensure because it promises a high standard of care to clients that deserve high quality care from all of their service providers. It also improves accountability for the profession which is critical for professionals and clients.

MT is evidence based and effective. Clients rely on it to maintain their well-being, socially, physically, cognitively, and emotionally. It is sometimes one of the only therapies accessible, effective, or available to support them in these areas. I am here on behalf of myself and my clients who deserve music therapists licensed in the state and held to the same standards as their other service providers.

HB 667 will allow patients more assurance that they are accessing quality care. It is already so difficult to navigate the health care system, so we want to be sure the most vulnerable Texans receive accessible high quality care. As a credentialed music therapist, I support state licensure for music therapists.

Emily Pickett  
Self  
Waxahachie, TX

I work for a hospital that employs music therapists, and I can attest that these professionals are paramount to the healing process. It's important to realize that the role of a certified music therapist is much different than playing music for patients for relaxation, pleasure, or distraction. Music therapy is physical, emotional, and mental therapy using music as a modality. This process requires an artful hand, a professional attuned to the needs of the patient, and a therapist who is highly trained in mental health. I've personally seen miraculous things happen when a certified music therapist walks into the room of a critically ill patient. It's life-saving, and the training they receive is invaluable to patient outcomes.

Todd Melton  
self, Board-Certified Music Therapist  
Katy, TX

April 3, 2023

Dear Legislator,

I am a Board-Certified Music Therapist working in the medical setting in Houston, TX. I am writing this letter to indicate my support of the music therapists in Texas as they seek the creation of a music therapy LICENSURE. This state recognition of the music therapy profession will help ensure that consumers in our state have access to music therapy services provided by a qualified practitioner. It will serve to both protect the public and increase their ability to choose and access healthcare services that best meets their needs. For this reason, I ask that you please support HB 667.

In my experience in the medical setting, music therapy has the potential to support patients and their families in an impactful way. As I have witnessed in the treatment 100s of patients of diverse backgrounds, diagnoses, and circumstances, music has been a bridge to help patients navigate their medical journey. Patients I work with often deal with pain, anxiety, and depression. Other patients have clinical goals related to lung strengthening, increasing their range of motion or stamina during a lengthy hospital stay. At other times, I provide support to families as they say goodbye to a loved one who is on hospice.

Like any skilled and trained professional, music therapists need to have state recognition of their profession and credential to ensure quality service delivery among its practitioners. Please consider supporting the establishment and maintenance of a license for music therapists in Texas by supporting HB 667.

Sincerely,

Todd Melton, MM, MT-BC

281-797-0185

Marissa Salinas  
self - Board Certified Music Therapist  
Houston, TX  
April 3, 2023

Dear Legislator,

I am a board certified music therapist working in critical care in one of the largest hospitals in Houston, Texas. I am writing this letter to indicate my support of the music therapists in Texas as we seek the creation of a music therapy LICENSURE. This state recognition of the music therapy profession will help ensure that consumers in our state have access to music therapy services provided by a qualified practitioner. It will serve to both protect the public and increase their ability to choose and access healthcare services that best meets their needs. For this reason, I ask that you please support HB 667.

In my experience, I have been able to assist students in school districts (K-12+) reach their academic goals through structured musical implementation. One of my students had never been able to intelligibly speak her name until it was put to a rhythm and melody. Now she sings her name everywhere she goes. Through my experience as a music therapist in hospice and palliative care, I was able to gift a musical legacy to a patient's family by providing a patient's recorded heartbeat over a favorite song. During my time as a music therapist in neuro-rehabilitation, I have assisted patient's in relearning how to walk and talk. A pediatric patient I worked with struggled to swallow food due to her cerebral palsy. By putting the steps to a song and implementing rhythm, the patient was able to appropriately swallow and finally taste her favorite foods again. I have been able to work with wonderful people and many more deserve the opportunity to work with a music therapist.

Like any skilled and trained professional, music therapists need to have state recognition of their profession and credential to ensure quality service delivery among its practitioners. Please consider supporting the establishment and maintenance of a license for music therapists in Texas by supporting HB 667.

Sincerely,

Marissa Salinas, MT-BC

Email: mcgt93@gmail.com  
Phone: 713-363-4220

John Head  
Self  
Houston, TX

I am writing to show my support for HB 667. Those who claim to provide music therapy should in fact be board certified music therapists. MT-BCs must undergo rigorous collegiate training in music, human development, and neuroscience. Someone claiming to be a music therapist and providing music therapy can cause harm to patients. Patients/clients of music therapists are largely vulnerable populations such as people with neurodevelopmental disorders, dementia, autism, and those experiencing delirium in hospitals. MT-BC's ensure that they are not providing music to people that may trigger emotional distress. They provide services that are culturally appropriate. There are many well meaning professionals who provide classical music for their patients without understanding the persons relationship with that music. Perhaps it is the music played at a loved ones funeral. Perhaps they are too sick to remove the headphones, Perhaps it was the music playing while they were being sexually abused, or perhaps it is simply culturally inappropriate. MT-BC's know how to assess, adapt, and process these issues with their clients. Music therapists undergo to much training and make too much of a difference to ignore their place as an allied health profession.

Marykatelyn Becnel

Self

League City, TX

As a music therapist who has worked in a variety of hospital settings, I realize that music is oftentimes viewed as an innocuous form of entertainment and that music therapy is a harmless offering. However, I have also witnessed music being used in harmful manners and the decompensation of patients' well-being and coping due to inappropriate use of music. Examples include nurses singing or playing loud music that is not patient-preferred but nursing-preferred music during already painful and overstimulating tubroom procedures where burn victims have their third-degree burns washed and cleaned. This procedure is already highly overstimulating and painful, and I have personally intervened to stop excessive and inappropriate musical stimulus from making the procedure more intolerable than it already is. Furthermore, as a music therapist, I have facilitated procedural support in which the music during the tubroom procedure is a therapeutic tool that aids the patient in managing the pacing and depth of their breathing, acted as distraction, or offered opportunities for patients to advocate for themselves and control one aspect of the procedure through their song choices.

It is not always clear to those who are not music therapists and work in the medical field and have witnessed firsthand how beneficial (or how potentially harmful) music can be in the recovery process. This is why I feel it is important for me to share a very small aspect of my perspective for you to understand the importance of music therapy licensure and protection in our field. Thank you for your time and hard work.

Maryanna Sokol

Self, Board-Certified Music Therapist

Houston, TX

I am a board certified music therapist employed full-time in a Houston Methodist ICU, where I work with patients of all ages with varying medical complications. Board Certification for Music Therapists is currently awarded and recognized nationally, but differs state-to-state. Music Therapy is an allied health profession requiring rigorous certification and maintenance requirements to continue practicing with a license. This includes a minimum 4 year bachelor degree, 1200 clinical internship hours, board certification exam, continuing education and ethical requirements, and specific training and experience on potentially harmful uses of music with specific populations. Music Therapy Texas State licensure would protect vulnerable and medically fragile patients from receiving musical intervention from untrained or unaware practitioners who refer to their treatment as "music therapy" without completing the necessary education or training to properly and safely provide intervention for these patients. HB 667 is bipartisan and has no fiscal note.

Hannah Mata, MMT, MT-BC

self, Board-Certified Music Therapist at Houston Methodist Willowbrook Hospital NICU

Katy, TX

April 3rd, 2023

Dear Legislator,

I am a Board Certified-Music Therapy working in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Houston Methodist Willowbrook Hospital in Houston, TX. I am writing this letter to indicate my full support of the music therapists in Texas as we seek the creation of a music therapy LICENSURE. This state recognition of the music therapy profession will help ensure that consumers, patients, and their families in our state have access to music therapy services provided by a qualified practitioner. It will serve to both protect the public and increase their ability to choose and access healthcare services that best meets their needs. For this reason and more, I ask that you please support HB 667.

As a Board-Certified Music Therapist for the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Level II and Level III, I provide evidence-based music therapy treatments for premature infants and their families. My own research this past year has provided quantitative evidence that music therapy significantly improves patient outcomes in the NICU. These outcomes included the reduction in infant pain during necessary medical procedures, improvements in infant heart rate and respiratory rate immediately after music therapy, and an increase in infant oxygen saturation. Additionally, music therapy is provided to help mothers and caregivers bond with their infant while in the NICU. As a result, there is a decrease in caregiver anxiety, improvement in their infant's growth, and a decrease in trauma responses. My research also revealed that infants who received music therapy in the NICU gained significantly more weight than infants who did not receive music therapy. I am incredibly passionate about my work, and it is a gift to see infants improve with music therapy on a daily basis. Your support for the licensure of music therapy would benefit both music therapy professionals and the families who receive music therapy services.

Like other health care professions, music therapists need to have state recognition of their profession and credential to ensure quality service delivery among its practitioners. Please consider supporting the establishment of a license for music therapists in Texas by supporting HB 667.

Sincerely,

Hannah Mata, Master of Music Therapy, Board-Certified Music Therapist

Neurologic Music Therapist

Houston Methodist Willowbrook Hospital NICU

Center for Performing Arts Medicine

hlmata@houstonmethodist.org

Kula Moore

Houston Methodist Hospital

Houston, TX

I am in favor of HB 667 for licensure for music therapists.

Diana Freeland

Houston Methodist Hospital

Houston, TX

I support the passing of HB 667 for licensure for music therapists in Texas. I work in Houston Methodist Behavioral Health with an excellent music therapist who sees people individually and in groups. He has done incredible work in assisting patients in gaining insight and understanding of their self defeating thoughts and beliefs.

Bess Reynolds

SELF

Houston, TX

I'm in favor of HB 667 for licensure for music therapists.

Cornelia Carley  
Self, Registered Nurse  
Carrollton, TX

As a registered nurse and caregiver for an individual with special needs, I have seen first hand the benefit of having well trained music therapists in the hospital and the home. Working in the ICU, I see how music therapy can help regulate vital signs and calm patients, therefore requiring less sedation or pain medication. I see how helping patients to play instruments helps to strengthen their upper body in a fun, engaging way, and how singing songs strengthens their voice, swallowing muscles, and opens up their lungs after being intubated, or laying in bed for prolonged periods. I see the intellectually disabled man I care for interact with the music therapists, his face lighting up when he hears them play instruments and, despite being non-verbal, moans and yells with the music in attempts to sing along. Music therapy is more than playing the guitar and putting on a show. The best trained therapists are the ones that went to school, expanded their knowledge, and obtained a board certification to be able to help patients both mentally and physically during their recovery. They read the patients vitals and their responses to the music and their interactions, and know what could benefit them as their recovery progresses. They also help to engage families in the care of their loved ones. A wife may not be able to titrate pressors or read lab values, but she can engage in music therapy and watch her husband smile and work with his hands, and by singing along with him can help encourage and improve his outcomes. That can be huge for people who feel so powerless when their loved ones are sick. I am in support of music therapists requiring a state license to ensure that patients are receiving appropriate and safe care. I am in support of music therapists being recognized at a state level to encourage medical facilities and programs to include them in patient care as they would a nurse or a physical therapist.

Donielle Montgomery  
Houston Methodist Hospital  
Houston, TX

Dear Legislator,

I am a music therapist working in the medical center in Houston, TX. I am writing this letter to indicate my support of the music therapists in Texas as they seek the creation of a music therapy licensure. This state recognition of the music therapy profession will help ensure that consumers in our state have access to music therapy services provided by a qualified practitioner. It will serve to both protect the public and increase their ability to choose and access healthcare services that best meets their needs. For this reason, I ask that you please support HB 667.

In my experience as a music therapist, I have heard testimonies from patients who acknowledge and credit music therapy services as a vital part of their hospital course. The presence of live music from a credentialed, board-certified music therapist is beneficial to patients who are having difficulties with pain management, effects of weaning off sedation, prolonged isolation due to extended hospital stay, among other needs.

Like any skilled and trained professional, music therapists need to have state recognition of their profession and credential to ensure quality service delivery among its practitioners. Please consider supporting the establishment and maintenance of a license for music therapists in Texas by supporting HB 667.

Sincerely,

Donielle Montgomery, MM, MT-BC

409-926-1887

Catherine Befi-Hensel, Dr.  
self / Board-Certified Music Therapist and music therapy educator  
San Antonio, TX

As a board-certified music therapist and music therapy educator, I strongly support HB 667. Music belongs to everyone, and everyone can enjoy and benefit from it. Board-certified music therapists are specially trained to use music to facilitate nonmusical goals, and the licensure and regulation of our profession will help ensure that music therapy will only be provided by trained, qualified individuals, and that our clients are receiving the high quality of service they deserve.