

Senate Bill 238

February 20, 2020

Dear Chairman McColley and the members of the Transportation, Commerce, and Workforce Committee,

Please accept this letter in support of Senate Bill 238.

My name is Deborah Carl and I have practiced art therapy in Ohio for over 20 years, I currently supervise art therapy graduate students at Ursuline College and work for the Art Therapy Studio, an agency with over 50 years of service to the Cleveland community. Populations I serve include veterans, homeless families, children experiencing trauma, and our citizens struggling with addiction.

I could tell you 100 stories about seeing recovery in people through using art making to heal but I will tell you just one. A WWII veteran's daughter contacted our state art therapy association known as BATA to enlist an art therapist after her father had suffered a stroke and surgery that left him cognitively impaired and in need of 24- hour assistance. He could no longer recall which way to turn from one room in his house to another or hold social conversations. But the weekly two - hour art therapy engagement, creating art under the supervision of a trained art therapist, provided an opportunity for recall, reignition of a life- long art interest, conversation and story - telling. Art therapy renewed in him a sense of dignity and restored to him the experience of holding a vital role within his family. His art works became conversation pieces and gifts at Sunday dinners with children and hung on the walls of his home as well as his children's homes, while also supporting him to talk openly in a conversational way again.

His family stated the services were important to his ability to remain at home for over two years. Recovery came by providing services that spoke an artistic language and adjusted to client needs. A professional, in other words, was engaged who had studied and practiced for 1000's of hours in order to identify and implement the client's need.

Art Therapy licensure in Ohio needs to join the many other states already having licensure in place. The public protection and standards of care that would result are vital. Please make Ohio the next state to ensure that art therapy services become expanded opportunities for recovery and healing.

Sincerely,

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