



**OhioHealth Riverside
Methodist Hospital**
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Senate Bill 238

March 10, 2020

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

Please accept this letter in support of Senate Bill 238.

My name is Steven Rice, and I have been a Board Certified Chaplain for 31 years in Columbus, Ohio. I served as the Chaplain for Hospice of Columbus from 1988 through 1994 and Chaplain with OhioHealth Hospice and Palliative Care from 1994 to the present.

I am writing this letter requesting your support by passing Senate Bill 238 because:

- **In the State of Ohio, passing Senate Bill 238 would clearly acknowledge that an Art Therapist is a professional therapist equal in qualifications with other State of Ohio licensed therapists such as LPCC and LISWs who share equivalent educational and professional clinical standards.**
- **Raising the Professional Bar for Art Therapist would recognize the value and benefits for Art Therapists in serving our fellow citizens of Ohio by establishing a State Standard of Care as we have in Ohio with other State licensed therapists.**
- **Passing this Bill 238, would encourage other individuals to pursue Art Therapy as their profession, but who cannot afford to pursue Art Therapy due to the present low financial remuneration and few Art Therapy positions available within the State. Passing Bill 238 acknowledges Art Therapists are Professionals and would open doors of opportunity.**
- **In order to meet the physical, mental, spiritual needs of those who receive health care in our State of Ohio, it is time to acknowledge the Profession of Art Therapists in Ohio by granting to this specific discipline a State licensure for Art Therapists by passing State Bill 238.**

The following two examples of professional therapeutic work of an Art Therapist are only two of the many patients I have worked with who, along with their family, benefited from the Art Therapy they received.

Patient A, was a 78 year old man who had hospice services at home. He said he was never good at art, but welcomed the visit of our Art Therapist. Together the Patient and Art Therapist painted a picture of the farm house he grew up in. He was amazed that he could paint on a canvass with a small brush.

Mr. A had time alone with the Art Therapist. This therapeutic time allowed Mr. A. to open himself up to his early life, with encouragement from the Art Therapist, he recreated a painting of his childhood home and yard. He discovered before he died a sense of meaning in what his family had accomplished and his experiences on the farm became a reminder of being loved through difficult times. His own family remarked how one painting, Mr. A's first and last, was a "God send."

Patient B, was a young woman who was admitted to OhioHealth Riverside Hospital for Failure to Thrive. As a mother of two young children, Patient B agreed to a visit by the Art Therapist. The Art Therapist introduced Patient B to a new method of expressing herself to her family and the medical staff through her works of art. She named each creation and eagerly told those who visited her what the art creation meant to her. Patient B's hospital unit had an Art Exhibit so she could display her works of art. For a patient who seemed to the medical team to have "given up," she discovered a new purpose for living. Three years later our former patient visits the hospital occasionally to say "hello," and "thank you" and show us what she is working on. As part of the hospital team we were in awe of Patient B's transformation as a result of the intervention of our Art Therapist and Patient B's decision to follow through with the suggested medical treatments.

I am thankful for the Art Therapists I know who bring their gifts of listening, understanding the human mind, body and spirit and are able to make a positive difference with those they encounter.

Chairman McColly, I hope you will be part of passing Senate Bill 238. Thank you.

Steven Rice, M.Div. Board Certified Chaplain, Advanced Chaplain Practitioner

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