



Testimony for the Ohio Senate Health Committee

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The Fine Arts Association

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Ohio Senate Health Committee, my name is Ann Marie Raddell, and I am the Director of Creative Arts Therapies at the Fine Arts Association in Willoughby, Ohio. I joined the Fine Arts Association team as a music therapist in 2009, eventually becoming the Music Therapy Coordinator, and in 2019, became the Director of Creative Arts Therapies. In addition to coordinating the Creative Arts Therapies department, and teaching and developing the early childhood music program at the Fine Arts Association, I provide individual and group music therapy services at Ss. Robert and William as part of the Fine Arts Off-Site Education Program. I am a board-certified music therapist with a specialty in Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Music Therapy.

The Fine Arts Association (FAA) focuses on the transformative power of art and music therapy and seeks to improve the lives of people of all ages and abilities in Northeast Ohio. Art and music therapy are powerful tools that can help people achieve non-artistic and non-musical goals. These goals can include improved gross and fine motor movement, growth in communication and language skills, improvement in emotional wellbeing and mental health, increased cognition, and much more. This is why we believe that art and music therapy can play an essential role in improving the overall health and well-being of individuals.

The challenges of the last several years have had a significant impact on mental health across the country. In 2009, we were a team of three part-time music therapists and one part-time art therapist. Since then, we have expanded to include eight full-time music therapists, three full-time art therapists, and two part-time art therapists, due to a quickly growing need and demand for creative arts therapies as well as broader recognition of the importance and impact of this field.

There is a wealth of evidence-based practice that proves that music therapy services can decrease pharmaceuticals billed and the number of nights spent in the hospital system, among other cost-effective aspects of art and music therapy. Research has shown that art and music therapy can be an effective treatment for a wide range of conditions, including depression, anxiety, PTSD, dementia, and more.

We are seeking a \$250,000 annual allocation in House Bill 33, and the Fine Arts Association would use the funds to specifically target children in the community in which we have observed a need for increased mental health services. We have also identified the need for more services for seniors in assisted living, nursing homes, rehabilitation services, or memory care units, as well as in their own

homes. This allocation would allow the Fine Arts Association to expand its senior services at 10 locations, serving approximately 240 seniors across Northeast Ohio, and provide services to 24 groups of school children, approximately 1,200 individuals, over the biennium.

As a mother of two children with disabilities, I can personally speak to the skills my own children have gained through the practices of art and music therapy. Not only am I a provider, but I am also a parent, so I have two different perspectives. I have seen firsthand the impact that art and music therapy can have on individuals, and I believe that everyone should have access to these services.

In conclusion, we believe that art and music therapy are essential components of mental health treatment, and we hope that you will consider our request for state funding to expand these services to those who need them the most. Thank you for your time and consideration. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.