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To Chairman Senator Rob McColley and the members of the Transportation, Commerce, and Workforce Committee:

Hello, my name is Brittany Scheer. I am a board certified music therapist and the owner of Living Music LLC, a private practice serving Auglaize and Mercer counties since 2013. I provide music therapy services to a variety of Ohio residents including seniors living in long term/rehabilitation care, seniors living in specialized dementia/memory care, people receiving hospice/end of life care, children and adults experiencing mental/emotional health issues, and adults/children with various developmental and/or neurological disorders. My private practice also initiates community oriented wellness programs like mother-infant play and music groups and community drumming.

I am writing as a small business owner on behalf of the many music therapy business owners in Ohio in support of SB238.

I have the great luxury of seeing how music therapy can help people live fuller, more meaningful lives when they are oftentimes in their most vulnerable states. I have lead experiences where simple songs such as “You are My Sunshine”, “What a Wonderful World”, and “Wish you Were Here” have brought people to tears—tears of sorrow, joy, meaning, love, attachment, and final goodbyes. It’s in these moments where I’m thankful to have the training as a board certified music therapist. I provide the atmosphere for people to be human in their experience of music. They can be open, honest, emotional, and trusting; and know that I am fully present with them.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, many music therapy businesses, including mine, have demonstrated the importance of our training in trauma/emotional needs and infection control. While we haven’t been able to continue in-person services everywhere, we have been able to continue in many places due to our vast knowledge of healthcare infection protocols and ability to adapt to new standards. We have the support and equipment to continue services safely in many places; and when we do not, we have been on the forefront of telehealth therapy services like the rest of the healthcare world.

As a business owner, I have experienced countless occasions where the title “Music Therapy” is mis-represented in these ways:

- Someone calls himself a music therapist and runs a CD player for nursing home residents to listen to for an hour.
- Prospective customers report that they already have music therapy because their chaplain or social worker sings to their patients
- Customers confuse listening programs such as Music & Memory with having music therapy
- Entertainers/staff report that they are providing “music therapy”; but cannot fully support emotional and physical/movement responses, which can at times inflict harmful experiences that compromise safety or psychological wellbeing.

While entertainment and listening programs are beneficial and much needed for many clients, music therapy is a deeper, individualized, personal music experience, and transcends these passive listening programs. My customers and clients deserve to have a



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qualified professional provide music therapy services to ensure optimal care. Music therapy licensure would provide the protection we need to ensure this is happening. Music therapy licensure would provide business owners leverage to gain customers and continue to thrive, helping the economy, job market, and most importantly, many more Ohio residents.

My private practice, as well as other music therapy businesses, has experienced loss of business as a result of not having a state license. Some healthcare professionals and institutions cannot hire music therapists for contractual work because of the requirements of their institution to have state licensed workers. This has been even more true during the COVID-19 pandemic, as searching for supplemental jobs and positions has been difficult without the support and regulation of a license. This vastly decreases Ohio resident's access to music therapy services, which greatly reduces their choice and right to have the healthcare services they deserve.

I am proud to offer music therapy services and continue to advocate and educate my current and prospective customers. My customers have experienced the benefit of music therapy, and most have expanded their music therapy programs. They feel offering music therapy gives them a unique and higher quality care level for their residents, and in turn assists in their community outreach. They are investing in the health of their clients, going above and beyond what is required because they believe in the power of music therapy.

All people deserve to have access to the services they need and desire including music therapy. I ask that you support small music therapy businesses like mine across the state of Ohio and vote yes on SB238.

Sincerely,

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