Subject 15 Minutes for Advocacy Letter 4

Dear MD Music Therapist,

This email continues the weekly advocacy series from your MD State Task Force. If you have any questions, please contact Niki Runge or Tatyana Martin at mdstate.task.force@gmail.com.

FYI: Proper letter writing style is formal: Date at the top left and align everything on the left

WEEK 4 ACTION ITEM: Organize your legislators’ names and addresses on your 3 documents using the template above. Then add the following paragraphs on each document.

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(Full Name) Maryland (Senate or Assembly) Address

Dear Senator or Delegate (Name):

Thank you for \*\*\***fill in the blank-list something you like about this rep and what he/she supports, preferable something in healthcare or education).** As a music therapist in your district, I understand the importance of providing services for \*\*\*.

Many of your constituents currently benefit from music therapy services. With over 103 music therapists in Maryland providing a variety of services in facilities such as nursing homes, schools, hospitals, hospices, group homes, pre-schools, and adult day programs, music therapy addresses a variety of goals. These goals can include decreasing anxiety prior to surgery, improving social skills in a group home, or engaging in life review in a hospice setting. Many of the parents of music therapy clients see the benefit of music therapy for their children. A music therapist may assist a child in learning to tell time, count money or improve communication using music as a tool.

As an allied health profession, recognized by the National Institutes of Health, music therapists must earn a bachelor’s degree or higher in music therapy from one of over 70 American Music Therapy (AMTA) approved colleges and universities which includes 1,200 hours of clinical training. At the completion of academic and clinical training, students are eligible to take the national examination administered by the Certification Board for Music Therapists (CBMT), an independent, non-profit certifying agency fully accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies. After successful completion of the CBMT examination, graduates are issued the credential necessary for professional practice, Music Therapist-Board Certified (MT-BC).

The music therapists in Maryland have formed a task force to pursue state recognition of the profession and the board certification required to practice. We understand the importance of obtaining official state recognition in order to increase access to services for the citizens of our state. Although the Maryland state personnel system recognizes music therapists and other creative arts therapists working in state facilities through the creation of Creative/Expressive Arts positions and Expressive Therapies are recognized by specific Medicaid Waivers, we are seeking support for a more formal and updated inclusion in the state’s occupational listings.

I would welcome the opportunity to talk with you in more detail about the benefits of music therapy for Maryland residents and to seek your recommendations on how best to proceed with achieving state recognition for music therapy. If your schedule permits, I would like to invite you to visit \*\*\* (**enter where he/she may observe a session of yours)** and observe music therapy in action.

Sincerely,

**YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE AND EMAIL**

Thank you for your advocacy!

Sincerely, MD State Task Force

Niki Runge, Co-Chair; Tatyana Martin, Co-Chair; Jason Baker, Mary D’Amato Emmert, Anne Lipe, Darcy Lipscomb, Bailey Hunter and Amy Tenney