

MINNESOTA

Community Health Center Profile

Minnesota is home to 17 Community Health Centers (FQHCs) operating 80+ sites in rural and urban medically underserved communities across the state.

For over 60 years, Minnesota's health centers have provided high-quality care to low-income Minnesotans. They are patient-governed, with patients forming the majority of each Board of Directors—ensuring care is accountable, responsive, and driven by local needs.

Health centers deliver comprehensive, whole-person care—often offering medical, dental, and behavioral health services under one roof through fully integrated care models. This approach improves health outcomes and increases access to care in communities across Minnesota.

168,801

HEALTH CENTER PATIENTS SERVED

51,909 Uninsured

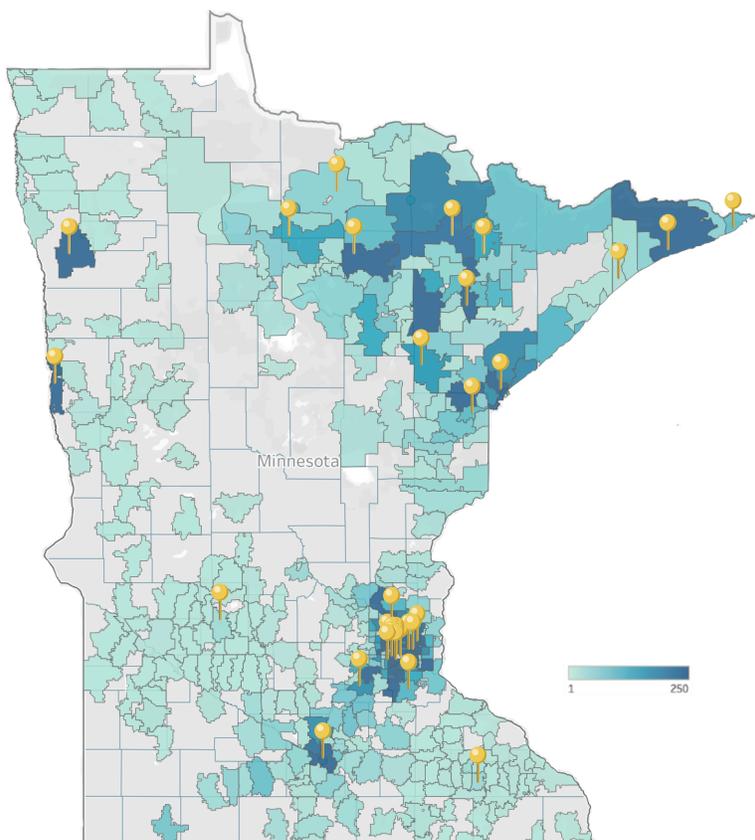
79,657 Medicaid

15,242 Medicare

21,993 Private

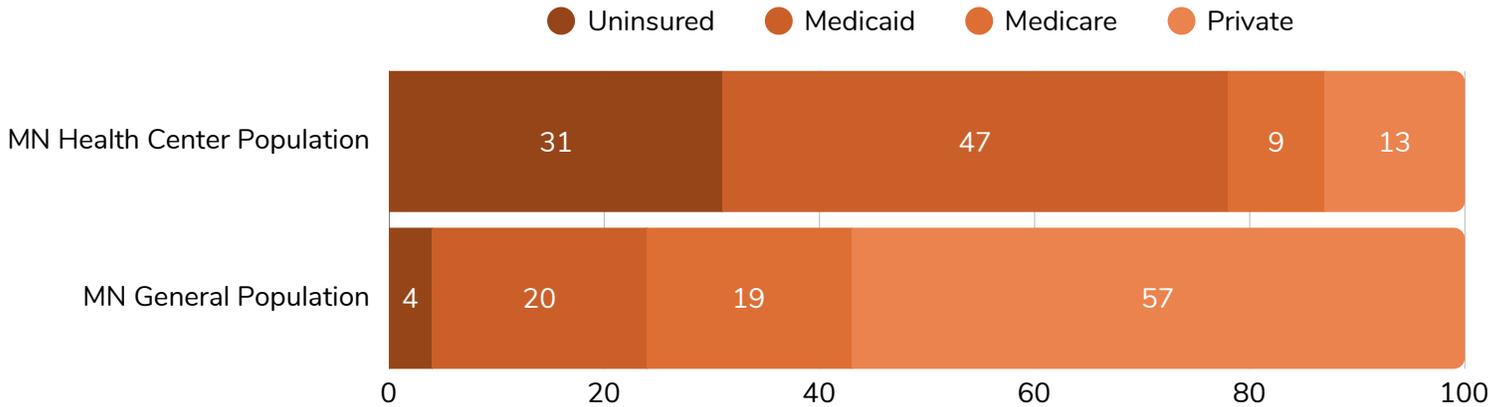
Minnesota Association of

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS



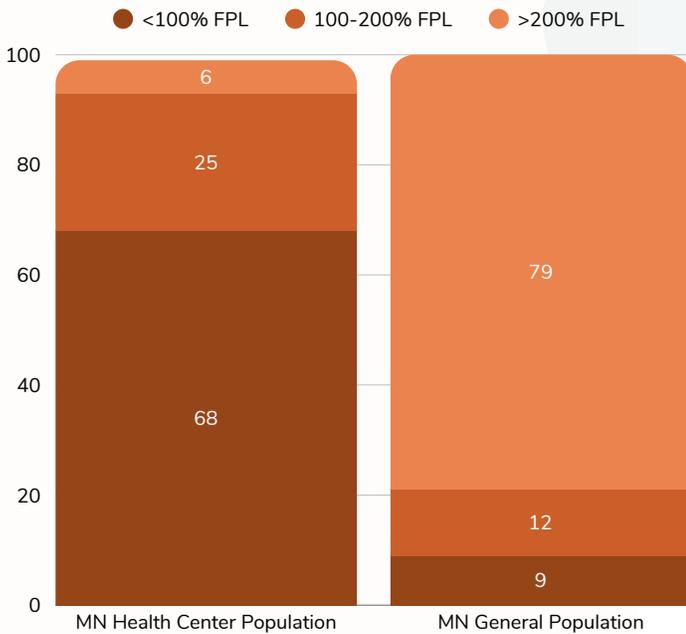
Health Center locations and health center patients served

CHC PATIENTS BY INSURANCE STATUS



Source: MDH Health Economics Program, 2023

CHC PATIENTS BY POVERTY LEVEL



Source: KFF, 2024

CHC PATIENT SERVICES

-  340,373 visits
120,753 patients
-  116,955 visits
50,242 patients
-  91,820 visits
13,960 patients
-  100% provide access to low cost medications

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?



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Contact Rochelle Westlund, Director of Public Policy at rochelle.westlund@mnachc.org

Hello,

My name is Paul Dunkirk-Greenbaum. I am a licensed massage therapist practicing in Minneapolis with 13 years of professional experience. I respectfully ask that you oppose HF362.

HF362 would significantly increase the cost and burden of practicing massage therapy in Minnesota without addressing any demonstrated public health concern.

Similar legislation has been promoted by the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA) in other states. For example, Wisconsin initially included grandfathering provisions for experienced practitioners during the early implementation of mandatory licensure, but today those provisions no longer apply and all massage therapists must meet the full requirements.

This creates serious concern that experienced professionals in Minnesota could face the same outcome.

If that happens here, I would be required to spend approximately \$10,000 on additional schooling and complete hundreds of hours of unpaid clinical work—despite already being a highly experienced practitioner. Many programs require around 200 hours of unpaid massage labor.

I earn between \$150 and \$200 per hour. Two hundred hours of unpaid work represents a loss of \$30,000 to \$40,000 in income. This is not simply an inconvenience; it is financially and physically harmful.

I practice deep tissue therapeutic massage, which is demanding on the body. I safely limit my work to about 20 hours per week to avoid injury. Requiring me to perform approximately 10 weeks of unpaid physical labor, while also attending roughly 550 additional hours of schooling for skills I already possess, puts both my health and my livelihood at risk.

There is no realistic way I could continue seeing my clients while fulfilling these requirements.

This bill would harm well-established, responsible massage therapists who have served their communities for years. It would also displace clients from receiving consistent therapeutic care, disrupting treatment for people managing chronic pain, injury recovery, and other health conditions. That disruption itself creates a public health concern rather than solving one.

For what purpose?

HF362 does not correct a known public health problem. It does not meaningfully improve consumer safety. Instead, it creates unnecessary financial and physical barriers for qualified professionals who are already practicing responsibly, while reducing care for the public.

I encourage you to review the information shared by SchaOn, which explains in detail why this bill is harmful and why it fails to address any legitimate public health issues.

AMTA's motivation appears to be financial rather than protective. I respectfully ask that you stand with Minnesota massage therapists and oppose HF362.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Paul Dunkirk-Greenbaum

I do oppose this bill being passed. I do not think this will be in our best interests to be controlled by the system esp since finally there is the realization that we are not the problem or the cause of sex trafficking.

There are many reasons for this why I am opposed and I am not able to write it all here because it is time consuming and difficult to put my words on paper because it is not easy for me to type. And I am much more clear sharing my feelings by phone. Please call me at this number and I can share with you my reasons why!

Thank you!

Mary Jo Otis(Battey)
Therapy Associates
5075132618

TO: House Health Policy and Finance Committee

ATTN: Committee Administrator Jack Dockendorf and Hanna Zimmerman

FROM: SchaOn Blodgett, CCP, BTAT, Traditional Naturopath

DATE: February 21, 2026

RE: Opposition to H.F. No. 362 (Minnesota Massage Therapy and Asian Bodywork Therapy Act)

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee,

As a Traditional Naturopath with over 25 years of experience in the field—beginning my journey in 1999 and practicing professionally since 2008—and a staunch advocate for Minnesota Statute 146A, which safeguards complementary and alternative health care practices, I bring a deep perspective informed by my roles as current Chair of the Integrative Health and Healing Advisory Board at Anoka-Ramsey Community College (since 2020), a former instructor on Holistic Medicine topics at Normandale College, previous Vice-Chair for the Twin Cities Holistic Chamber of Commerce (2013-2014), guest speaker and expert panelist at local events (as well as invited to national and international events) on holistic health, and recipient of “Best Holistic Medicine Practitioner” recognition (2015–2016). **The views expressed in this letter are my own personal views as an independent practitioner and do not represent, nor are they authorized by, any current or past committees, boards, organizations, or associations with which I have been affiliated.**

I write to strongly oppose H.F. No. 362. This bill, while framed as a public safety measure, imposes unnecessary regulatory barriers that threaten the livelihoods of experienced practitioners, stifle cultural and traditional modalities, and erode the effective, consumer-empowering framework already in place under 146A. Minnesota's existing laws, including disciplinary actions under 146A and criminal penalties under Title 609, adequately address misconduct without mandating licensure that disproportionately burdens legitimate providers.

1. **Economic Realities Undercut Claims of Benefit** Salary data for massage therapists is often inflated and fails to reflect practical earnings. For instance, ZipRecruiter reports an average annual salary of \$70,204 in Minnesota, but this assumes full-time work that is unrealistic given the profession's physical demands, leading many to part-time schedules earning closer to \$25,000–\$40,000 annually. Indeed.com data shows an

average hourly wage of \$37.55 in Minnesota, comparable to \$40.90 in licensed Wisconsin—demonstrating that licensure provides no meaningful economic uplift but adds costs like fees, insurance, and education. In fact, BLS national data pegs the median at \$55,310, with no evidence that licensure boosts incomes beyond unlicensed states like Minnesota. This bill risks driving practitioners out of the field without delivering promised gains.

2. **Prohibitive Educational Mandates Harm Cultural Modalities** Section 148.6366 requires 625 contact hours of Westernized education, ignoring the rigorous, lineage-based training in modalities like Lomi Lomi, Thai Massage, and Ayurveda protected under 146A. These traditions emphasize holistic, culturally specific approaches that do not align with the bill's one-size-fits-all model, forcing practitioners to invest in irrelevant coursework or abandon their practices. Even the pre-2031 "grandfathering" period demands completion of a qualifying program, offering no true exemption for Minnesota's experienced providers under 146A. This cultural erasure diminishes access to diverse healing options and contradicts 146A's inclusive spirit.
3. **Licensure Fails to Combat Human Trafficking** Proponents claim licensure curbs trafficking and illicit activity, but industry leaders and data disagree. In a 2017 joint statement, the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA) and Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals (ABMP) rejected reports blaming the legitimate massage profession, noting that traffickers operate outside ethical practices and adeptly evade regulations. AMTA emphasizes that trafficking is not inherent to professional massage and advocates against stereotypes linking the two, supporting targeted policies without harming the profession. ABMP echoes this, arguing that over-regulating legitimate therapists via local ordinances or state mandates punishes the innocent without addressing criminal networks. Data from the National Human Trafficking Hotline (2007–2021) shows that unlicensed states like Minnesota average 6.93% of human trafficking cases linked to spas/massages, while licensed states average 9.44%—indicating licensure does not reduce, and may even attract, illicit operations by providing a guise of legitimacy. In states with licensure, illicit operations persist, co-opting "massage" as a front—proving this bill offers a false solution while burdening law-abiding practitioners.

4. **Risk of Government Overreach and Loss of Autonomy** Licensure invites undue interference, as seen in Oregon during the COVID-19 pandemic. There, the Oregon Health Authority's OAR 333-019-1010 mandated vaccinations for licensed healthcare providers, including massage therapists in certain settings, forcing choices between personal medical decisions and professional livelihoods. Placing massage under the Commissioner of Health creates a similar framework for future mandates, undermining practitioners' autonomy and the freedoms enshrined in 146A. This overreach could extend to other complementary modalities, eroding Minnesota's progressive approach to holistic health.

5. **Superior Transparency Under 146A's Client Bill of Rights** Minnesota's Client Bill of Rights (146A.11) fosters genuine accountability by requiring practitioners to disclose their specific training, credentials, and approaches—empowering clients far beyond a generic license. This system:
 1. **Promotes Informed Choice:** Clients evaluate a practitioner's "resume" against their needs, rather than relying on state-issued credentials.
 2. **Builds Trust Through Honesty:** By clarifying no uniform state standards, it encourages active consumer participation in health decisions. Licensure would replace this tailored transparency with bureaucracy, without enhancing safety.
 3. **Supports Client Partnership in Wellness:** The detailed disclosure enables true collaboration, where clients can ask informed questions about the practitioner's methods, philosophy, and fit for their goals—fostering a shared journey toward wellness rather than passive reliance on a state credential. Licensure would replace this tailored transparency with bureaucracy, without enhancing safety.

In conclusion, H.F. No. 362 solves no real problems while jeopardizing diverse practices, economic viability, and the robust protections of 146A. I urge you to vote NO and preserve Minnesota's model of accessible, transparent complementary care.

Sincerely,

SchaOn Blodgett, CCP, BTAT, *he/him*

Traditional Naturopath • Complementary & Alternative Medicine Professional under MN Statute 146a

**Psinergy Natural Health & Holistic Wellness | Helping you access your
Awesomeness... *Naturally.***

...a branch of Psinergy LLC

6050 50th St N.

Oakdale/St Paul, MN 55128

Office: (612) 217-4325

schaon@psinergyhealth.com

<https://www.psinergyhealth.com>

It has recently come to my attention that there is a potential bill being discussed on Monday (with 22 authors) having to do with the legislation of the field of massage therapy. This was the topic of discussion as far back as 1987, when it was determined that there is no harm done in the field of massage.

I am a professional in the field of massage, now fully retired, and I am opposed to the bill. The income from the bill (\$285 for the first year, \$185 for subsequent years) would not be a lot for the average worker. But the imposition of the field will limit the number of people willing to provide the service and will not make it "safe" for anyone any more than it would be without the service. There is, already, a law on record regarding prostitution. This bill would have nothing to do with that.

I am opposed to the bill.

Stuart Holland

Dear House Health and Finance Committee Members,

We appreciate the opportunity to provide additional insight in support of HF 362, legislation that would establish statewide licensure for Minnesota massage therapists.

The American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA) advocates for fair and consistent professional licensing in all 50 states, promotes public education on the efficacy of massage therapy, fosters professional ethics and standards, and supports the advancement of clinical massage therapy research. AMTA represents more than 108,000 members nationwide.

Massage therapy is an integral component of the U.S. health care system and is widely recognized as an effective, non-pharmacological approach to pain management. A substantial body of clinical research supports its efficacy, with endorsements from institutions such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the American College of Physicians, the American Academy of Family Medicine, and The Joint Commission. Leading healthcare organizations, including Mayo Clinic, MD Anderson Cancer Center, Duke Integrative Medicine, the Cleveland Clinic, and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center—have integrated massage therapy into patient care for a range of medical conditions.

Minnesota remains one of only four states without statewide licensure for massage therapy. As a result, many massage therapists in the state must navigate a patchwork of local ordinances, comply with multiple municipal regulations, and pay a multitude of fees. This fragmented system creates unnecessary financial burdens, regulatory inconsistencies, and confusion for both practitioners and the public.

Statewide licensure is essential to ensuring public protection, professional accountability, and uniform standards of practice. Licensure would establish a clear scope of practice, set minimum education and training requirements, require background checks for all massage practitioners, and create a system to address ethical violations and disciplinary concerns. It would distinguish trained and qualified massage therapy professionals from unregulated or potentially harmful practices, strengthening consumer confidence and safety.

Without massage therapy licensure, Minnesota residents lack the consistent protection available in nearly every other state. Public safeguards remain limited, as mechanisms are not implemented to address background checks, ethical violations, and convictions relevant to the practice of massage therapy and Asian bodywork.

AMTA Board of Directors

President Cindy E. Farrar | **President-Elect** Rick Greely | **Immediate-Past President** Kimberly Kane-Santos

Directors Jaime Bernardo Jr., Heber J. Blackner, Matthew Fecteau, Donald Goodale, Robert C. Jantsch, Jane Horton Johnson, Deb Kilty, Cheryl L. Siniakin, Ph.D., Lee Stang



HF 362 establishes statewide standards that protect consumers and practitioners while expanding access to safe, quality care across Minnesota. Establishing massage therapy licensure through this bill is a crucial step toward increasing access to non-pharmacological care while strengthening public and practitioner safety.

AMTA remains committed to advocating for the highest professional standards on behalf of massage therapists and the public. We appreciate you taking the time to learn more about the need for massage therapy licensure and respectfully urge the committee to support HF 362.

Sincerely,



James Specker
AMTA Senior Director, Government & Industry Relations
jspecker@amtamassage.org

February 23, 2026

Representative Robert Bierman
Representative Jeff Backer
Co-Chairs of the Health Finance and Policy Committee

Re: HF 362 — Pinto: Licensure for massage therapy and Asian bodywork therapy established, fees established, criminal penalties provided, and money appropriated.

Dear Chair Bierman, Chair Backer and Members of the Health Finance and Policy Committee,

The City of Minneapolis appreciates the opportunity to comment in support of SF 362, as this legislation will establish a comprehensive state licensure system for massage therapists and Asian bodywork therapists in Minnesota.

In 2013, the Minneapolis City Council passed an ordinance that regulated massage businesses to safeguard public health, safety and welfare by ensuring that massage businesses operate in a legitimate, professional and sanitary manner. The ordinance demonstrated that structured licensing and inspection systems strengthen compliance and reduce unlicensed activity linked to trafficking, while enabling authorities to identify and shut down suspicious establishments more efficiently. Following implementation of the ordinance, the City closed multiple unlicensed massage businesses that were operating as fronts for illegal activity, and enforcement officials were able to intervene more quickly using licensing tools rather than lengthy investigations. Extending consistent standards statewide would build on this proven approach, enhancing protections for workers, clients, and legitimate practitioners across Minnesota.

A uniform statewide licensure framework will also help curb exploitation and human trafficking by closing regulatory gaps that allow bad actors to move between cities/jurisdictions. Trafficking and exploitation often thrive where oversight is inconsistent. Therefore, establishing clear, enforceable statewide standards, including education requirements, background checks, and accountability mechanisms, reduces opportunities for exploitative practices to go undetected.

This legislation is a crucial step toward protecting consumers, elevating professional standards, and strengthening the integrative health landscape in our state.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this important public policy initiative.

Sincerely,



Amanda Harrington, LICSW, MSW, JD
Director, Neighborhood Safety Department
City of Minneapolis

February 23, 2026

Representative Robert Bierman
Representative Jeff Backer
Co-Chairs of the Health Finance and Policy Committee

Re: HF 3444 — Mahamoud: Use of prior authorization and step therapy for drugs used in the treatment of opioid use disorder under medical assistance prohibited.

Dear Chair Bierman, Chair Backer and Members of the Health Finance and Policy Committee,

The City of Minneapolis supports evidence-based policies that improve health outcomes, reduce overdose deaths, and promote timely access to medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD). We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments in support of HF 3444.

Over the past five years, Minneapolis has seen a significant increase in fatal opioid overdoses, from 83 in 2017 to 231 in 2022, a 178% increase. While Minneapolis represents 7% of Minnesota's population, it accounted for over 20% of Minnesota's fatal opioid-related overdoses in 2022. In 2021, there were over 1,200 inpatient and outpatient hospital visits connected to opioids among Minneapolis residents, demonstrating the continued impact of opioid use disorder on our healthcare system and communities.

The City of Minneapolis Health Department supports HF 3444, which would prohibit prior authorization and step therapy for any FDA-approved class of drugs used to treat opioid use disorder. We have heard from patients, clinicians, and community partners that prior authorization requirements can delay access to treatment during a critical window when individuals are ready to begin care.

Prior authorization processes can delay patient care and substance use disorder (SUD) treatment. Because SUD treatment frequently involves urgent clinical care needs, prior authorization requirements can create barriers to timely access to medication, increasing health risks and the potential for overdose. Early intervention and continuity of care in treating SUD are critical components of effective public health response. Streamlining access to MOUD aligns with established clinical guidance and supports providers in delivering patient-centered care.

The Minneapolis Health Department supports legislative efforts that reduce administrative barriers, align coverage policies with evidence-based treatment, and advance equitable access to life-saving care across our City and throughout Minnesota. Thank you for your consideration of HF 3444.

If we can provide additional information or technical assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Heidi Ritchie, MAL, BSN, RN, PHN
Deputy Commissioner, Health Department
City of Minneapolis

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: Children and Adolescents

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers (clients/patients) and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Bradley Duea Provisional LICSW

Role Manager of Partial Hospital Program

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Centracare St. Cloud Hospital

Address 1564 County Road 134

City and ZIP St. Cloud MN 56303

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: Children with functional impairment due to a mental health diagnosis

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers (clients/patients) and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials: Brianna Bloedorn, LICSW

Role: Psychotherapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable): CentraCare Clara's House PHP

Address 1564 County Road 134

City and ZIP St Cloud, MN 56303

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:
families, teens, young adults, and students in an 18-21 transition school program under IEPs.

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: Many of us have earned multiple licensenses and credentials in the process of our careers. I am a Licensed Marriage and Family therapist as well as a Board Certified AT.

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Heather Oxendale

Role Art Therapist and School and Family Mental Health Professional

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Greater Minnesota Family Services

Address 2320 E HWY 12, Suite 2

City and ZIP Willmar, MN 56201

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: Adolescents ages 12-18

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers (clients/patients) and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials: Jessica Gapinski, MSW LGSW

Role: Associate psychotherapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable): St. Cloud Hospital (Clara's House)

Address: 1564 County Road 134

City and ZIP: St. Cloud, MN 56303

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: I primarily work in Rural areas of Minnesota.
I work with parents and foster parents involved in CPS cases.

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
 - It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
 - It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
 - It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
 - Other: Allows children to receive help in other ways than traditional therapeutic settings.
-

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Katie Nance, BS, MHP

Role Family Support Specialist Supervisor

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Greater Minnesota Trauma Center

Address 108 S Minnesota Avenue

City and ZIP St. Peter,

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

Erin Rafferty-Bugher ATR-BC, LPCC
www.Brainspark.art
brainsparkart@gmail.com

HF 2590

Committee: House Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

From: Erin Rafferty-Bugher ATR-BC, LPCC

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman

Please accept this letter in support of **SF 1675** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy when mental health in Minnesota is at the forefront of the conversation.

I am an art therapist and a licensed mental health professional with over 25 years of experience practicing in Minnesota. My professional background includes providing trauma-informed art therapy services across various age groups—children, adolescents, and adults/older adults—in both long-term educational settings and clinical behavioral mental health hospitals. Currently, I provide art therapy and counseling to adults and older adults on the inpatient mental health units for United Hospital/ Allina Hospital System.

In addition to my direct practice, I have been involved in teaching, supervising, and mentoring emerging professionals since 2008, contributing to the establishment of Minnesota's first accredited art therapy program, including expanding field experience partnerships to develop sites that support ethical art therapy training and continue to provide high-quality art therapy mental health services for their community to this day.

I have been fortunate to serve our community in MN and have observed that art therapy is an effective way for individuals to enhance emotional regulation, foster social engagement, reduce behavioral issues, manage and reduce as well as understand mental health-related trauma symptoms, express hope, and increase healthcare giver compassion, thereby improving the quality of patient care. Art therapy plays a crucial role in clarifying diagnostic information for a full representation of the human condition and suffering with a compassionate understanding. Art Therapy often provides valuable clinical insights into the treatment plan and care trajectory of patients at all levels of care.

Additionally, art therapy creates a meaningful legacy of remembrance for families at the end of life by providing mementos and opportunities for grief to be expressed. Art Therapy offers a voice for those who struggle with verbal communication. The art product and process serve as a window into the souls, hearts, and minds of individuals. , The art therapy group setting fosters engagement with individuals from diverse backgrounds, political affiliations, worldviews, and life experiences in mental health environments, creating a space where everyone can belong and connect empathically- something we need more than ever in our MN community today.

Erin Rafferty-Bugher ATR-BC, LPCC
www.Brainspark.art
brainsparkart@gmail.com

Art therapy has inspired many the motivation to seek therapy with consistent participation and ongoing increased attendance and engagement in groups and treatment, offering a creative and interactive way to engage, learn, build skills and connect that our patients and clients enjoy.

As a legislator, your constituent families and communities have benefited heavily from the services of art therapists and ongoing mental health support services in general in the last 20+ years. Art therapists have supported individuals and communities throughout the state of Minnesota, from veterans returning home after service, incarcerated adults and teenagers, immigrants arriving in Minnesota, locals experiencing infrastructure failures, neighborhoods impacted by a large scale social community uprising in 2020, students and teachers during and after COVID-19 shut downs, many individuals experiencing personal loss or financial insecurity, and helping professionals who worked the frontlines during the pandemic. Your prominent and impactful voice in supporting mental health, especially for those in your districts and in our state, is essential in times of trauma and afterward.

I urge you to continue this support by expanding resources through the licensing of clinical art therapists. I support this bill, and the much-needed state licensure of clinical art therapy. I urge you, our state's representatives, to do the same and recognize and protect the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,
Erin Rafferty-Bugher ATR-BC, LPCC



CC:

- Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
- Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
- My MN House Rep: (you have to look it up onlin)
- DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
- DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
- Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
- Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

Heart Space Therapy
Maddie Johnson, LMFT, ATR-BC - www.heartspacetherapy.org
maddie@heartspacetherapy.org

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

From: Maddie Johnson, LMFT, ATR-BC

Dear Chair Backer and Chair Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota is at the forefront of the conversation.

I am a licensed marriage and family therapist who has practiced in Minnesota for over 10 years. Throughout my experience, I have worked as an art therapist and program lead in various settings including, partial hospitalizations, clinics, in-home and day treatment. I have witnessed firsthand the benefits of art therapy as an effective intervention for individuals facing a wide variety of mental health concerns including attachment issues, anxiety, depression, addiction, trauma, relational injuries, bipolar disorder, eating disorders, OCD, oppositional defiant disorders and other behavioral health disorders.

Art therapy offers a valuable opportunity for enhanced emotional regulation, improved social engagement, reduced behavioral issues, better symptom management, and a meaningful expression of hope. It has been instrumental in providing critical clinical insights that support treatment plans and care trajectories.

Moreover, art therapy has positively motivated patients to attend groups and treatment sessions consistently, due to its non-threatening, creative, and interactive nature. I have seen first hand how much art therapy has altered the course of treatment for children, adults and families. By incorporating hands-on experiences that support expression, communication and relationship building, clients are able to regulate on a sensory level as well as emotional.

As a legislator, your constituent families and communities have benefited heavily from the services of art therapists and ongoing mental health support services in general in the last 5-10 years. Art therapists have supported individuals and communities throughout the state of Minnesota, from veterans returning home after service, incarcerated adults and teenagers, immigrants arriving in Minnesota, locals experiencing infrastructure failures, neighborhoods impacted by a large scale social community uprising in 2020, students and teachers during and after COVID-19 shut downs, many individuals experiencing personal loss or financial insecurity, and helping professionals who worked the frontlines during the pandemic. Your prominent and impactful voice in supporting mental health, especially for those in your districts and in our state, is essential in times of trauma and afterward.

Heart Space Therapy
Maddie Johnson, LMFT, ATR-BC - www.heartspacetherapy.org
maddie@heartspacetherapy.org

I urge you to continue this support by expanding resources through the licensing of clinical art therapists. I support this bill, and the much-needed state licensure of clinical art therapy. I urge you, our state's representatives, to do the same and recognize and protect the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,
Maddie Johnson, LMFT, ATR-BC

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

My MN House Rep: Ilhan Omar

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a member of the community in this way (e.g. parent, business owner, art therapy client):

Therapy Client

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed.
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other arts-based professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: It would provide a structured guideline for communication with clients who need an alternative form of expression.

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Nicole Drong

Role _____

Agency/Organization (If applicable) _____

Address 2170 Ridge Dr #35

City and ZIP St. Louis Park, MN 55416

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: Adolescents and adults facing anxiety, depression, trauma, ASD, bipolar disorder, grief, relationship issues, substance use, LGBTQIA+ identities, and parenting support.

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Nicole Witt, MA, LPCC, ATR-BC, ATCS

Role Art therapist, LPCC & Art Therapy clinical supervisor

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Art of Counseling, PLLC

Address 275 Fourth St E, Unit 300

City and ZIP St. Paul, MN 55101

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:
individuals and families aged 9 years old and above

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: Over the course of the last 30 years, I have witnessed hundreds of clinical success stories that were directly attributed to best practice art therapy interventions.

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Chuck Rankin, MA - ATR

Role Outpatient Art Therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Sagent Behavioral Health

Address 101 Dehler Drive

City and ZIP Sartell, MN 56377

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:
Individuals, Children, Adolescents, Young Adults, Adults, Couples, Neurodivergent, Parents/Guardians
Anxiety, Depression, Trauma, Grief/Loss, Career/Life Transition, Stress Management, ADHD/ASD/AuDHD

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: Art Psychotherapy provides a hands-on outlet and/or container for emotions when words are hard or inaccessible; verbal and nonverbal creative expression of thoughts and feelings for processing together for understanding, healing, and develop emotional literacy and agility

Increase possibility for insurance reimbursement coverage and access to medically necessary care

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Angela Dirks, MA, ATR, Pre-Licensed LPCC (finalizing requirements)

Role Pre-Licensed Therapist and Registered Art Therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Sagent Behavioral Health (formerly Ellie Mental Health)

Address 4150 Olson Memorial Hwy, Suite 110

City and ZIP Golden Valley, Minnesota 55422

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:

Adults w/ chronic illness, oncology, and grief

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: Will draw more Art Therapists to practice in MN

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Amy Kelbrener, MA, LPCC, ATR

Role Art Therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) In Mind Health

Address 1121 Town Centre Dr Suite 100

City and ZIP Eagan, MN, 55123

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo



BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY

Student Center for Health & Counseling
1500 Birchmont Drive NE #42
Bemidji, MN 56601
218-755-2053
218-755-2750 fax

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

From: Amanda Gartner, MA, LPCC

Dear Chair Backer and Chair Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota is at the forefront of the conversation.

I am a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor who has practiced in Minnesota for over 11 years. Throughout my experience, I have worked alongside art therapy providers in my clinical role as Mental health professional at Bemidji State University's Student Center for Health & Counseling. I have witnessed firsthand the benefits of art therapy as an effective intervention for individuals facing extreme distress and in need of stability, as well as an alternative method of processing their emotions when talk therapy is not the best option.

Art therapy offers a valuable opportunity for enhanced emotional regulation, improved social engagement, reduced behavioral issues, better symptom management, and a meaningful expression of hope. It has been instrumental in providing critical clinical insights that support treatment plans and care trajectories.

Moreover, art therapy has positively motivated patients to attend groups and treatment sessions consistently, due to its non-threatening, creative, and interactive nature. It is a method of therapy for all ages, from toddlers to elderly. From the neuroscience perspective, art therapy taps into part of our brain that does not rely on the prefrontal cortex to use words, therefore it can be effective not just persons of all ages, but persons of all mental capacities, too.

Coming from rural Minnesota, I think it important to emphasize the general need for more mental health providers. Including more certification levels, like the licensed clinical art therapist, will help us fill some of the major gaps in mental health care services. The current waitlist for Sanford Behavioral Health in Bemidji is six months. All of us mental health providers need extra support. Art therapy will certainly help, in particular for children and geriatric populations in want of mental health support.

As a legislator, your constituent families and communities have benefited heavily from the services of art therapists and ongoing mental health support services in general in the last 5-10 years. Art therapists have supported individuals and communities throughout the state of Minnesota, from veterans returning home after service, incarcerated adults and teenagers,



BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY

**Student Center for Health & Counseling
1500 Birchmont Drive NE #42
Bemidji, MN 56601
218-755-2053
218-755-2750 fax**

immigrants arriving in Minnesota, locals experiencing infrastructure failures, neighborhoods impacted by a large scale social community uprising in 2020, students and teachers during and after COVID-19 shut downs, many individuals experiencing personal loss or financial insecurity, and helping professionals who worked the frontlines during the pandemic. Your prominent and impactful voice in supporting mental health, especially for those in your districts and in our state, is essential in times of trauma and afterward.

I urge you to continue this support by expanding resources through the licensing of clinical art therapists. I support this bill, and the much-needed state licensure of clinical art therapy. I urge you, our state's representatives, to do the same and recognize and protect the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Amanda Gartner, MA, LPCC

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

My MN House Rep: Rep. Bidal Duran

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner & certified nurse midwife - working out patient psych with predom. trauma, addiction, ADHD

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.

Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Amy Langenfeld, APRN, CNM, PMHNP-BC
Role Mental Health Provider - therapy & medication management
Agency/Organization (If applicable) Mental Health Counseling Services
Address 615 1st Ave NE, Ste 310
City and ZIP Minneapolis, MN 55413

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a member of the community in this way (e.g. parent, business owner, art therapy client):
I attend therapy and I am also a fiber artist. I crochet daily for my mental health.

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed.
 - It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other arts-based professions.
 - It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
 - Other: All of the Above!
-

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name Andre Henjum & Credentials

Role _____

Agency/Organization (If applicable)

Address 1705 Atlantic Street

City and ZIP Maplewood, MN 55109

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: Law Enforcement/First Responder Populations

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers (clients/patients) and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,
Name & Credentials Melanie Koenen. LMFT
Role Owner and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
Agency/Organization (If applicable) Better Things Ahead Counseling
Address 690 Humboldt Dr. Suite I
City and ZIP Big Lake, MN 55309

CC:
Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo



Bethany Kepler, M.A.

Art Therapist, Counselor

p. 612-367-7933 - f. 612-465-1157 - E. bethany@arttherapymn.com

The Ivy Arts Building - 2637 27th Ave. S. #247, #248, #249—Minneapolis, MN 55406

11/11/2025

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

I am writing to express my strong support for SF1675, which will license clinical art therapists in the state of Minnesota. This bill represents an important step toward ensuring that Minnesotans have access to safe, ethical, and evidence-based mental health care that integrates creative and expressive approaches.

I have worked in the mental health field with a wide range of populations, including Native American communities and individuals with low income. Since becoming a therapist in 2021, I have been dedicated to helping my clients reduce stress, increase self-awareness, and develop skills for emotional wellness. I am currently working toward licensure as both a clinical therapist and a licensed art therapist.

My therapeutic approach is holistic and person-centered. I believe that empathy, compassion, humor, creativity, and genuine human connection are essential to healing. My goal is to help clients improve their relationships with themselves and others by exploring and making meaning of their experiences. I am deeply committed to diversity, inclusion, and accessibility, and I strive to create a secure and affirming environment for all individuals seeking growth and healing.

Through my work, I have seen firsthand the transformative power of art therapy. Clients who struggled to express themselves in traditional talk therapy often find their voice through the creative process. Art therapy allows for emotional regulation, trauma integration, and meaning-making that transcends words. For example, I have witnessed adolescents reduce self-harming behaviors through art-based coping interventions, and adults process grief and trauma by externalizing painful experiences safely through creative expression.

Art therapists across Minnesota serve diverse communities—from veterans returning from service and incarcerated individuals to immigrants, students, educators, and healthcare workers. Especially in the past decade, art therapists have been instrumental in supporting those affected by community trauma, social unrest, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Your continued support for mental health care, including the licensing of clinical art therapy, is vital to ensuring that these services remain accessible, ethical, and

effective.

I respectfully urge you to support SF 1675 and help recognize art therapy as a licensed mental health profession in Minnesota. This legislation will strengthen our state's mental health system and expand access to healing for individuals and families across our communities. I support the much-needed state licensure of clinical art therapy, and I urge our state's representatives to pass this legislation in support of the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at either 952-270-9108 or at bethany@arttherapymn.com.



Bethany Kepler, MA, Art Therapist, Counselor
p. 612-367-7933 - f. 612-465-1157 - E. bethany@arttherapymn.com
2637 27th Ave. S. #247, Minneapolis, MN 55406
Supervised by Angela (Pitton) Abdo, LPCC
Master of Arts, Counseling and Art Therapy – Adler Graduate School

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a member of the community in this way (e.g. parent, business owner, specific profession):

Nurse

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed.
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other arts-based professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials

Cheryl Borel

Role

RN

Agency/Organization (If applicable)

Fairview

Address

City and ZIP

Bloomington 55420

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a member of the community in this way (e.g. parent, business owner, specific profession):

parent

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed.
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other arts-based professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Daniel Urban

Role _____

Agency/Organization (If applicable) _____

Address 948 Trillium Ct

City and ZIP Eagan, MN 55123

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a member of the community in this way (e.g. parent, business owner, specific profession):
veterinary receptionist

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed.
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other arts-based professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,
Name & Credentials Emily Van Zee

Role veterinary receptionist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) _____

Address 5255 W 82nd St. Apt 114

City and ZIP Bloomington, MN 55437

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a member of the community in this way (e.g. parent, business owner, specific profession):
parent

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed.
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other arts-based professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,
Name & Credentials Gage Anderson
Role Parent
Agency/Organization (If applicable) _____
Address 6586 154th St W
City and ZIP Apple Valley 55124

CC:
Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a member of the community in this way (e.g. parent, business owner, specific profession):

parent

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed.
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other arts-based professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Kailey Moran

Role _____

Agency/Organization (If applicable) _____

Address _____

City and ZIP Eagan 55123

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a member of the community in this way (e.g. parent, business owner, specific profession):

Technical writer

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed.
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other arts-based professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials

Kathryn Bole

Role

Technical writer

Agency/Organization (If applicable)

Address 14209 E 143rd Ct

City and ZIP Burnsville, MN 55337

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a member of the community in this way (e.g. parent, business owner, specific profession):

parent

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed.
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other arts-based professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Naomi Anderson

Role Parent

Agency/Organization (If applicable) _____

Address 6586 154th ST W

City and ZIP Apple Valley, 55124

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

Tiffany D.

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapy graduate student living and studying in Minnesota. I chose the field of art therapy because: I have always been passionate about making art and helping people

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for newly graduated students to work and practice as Art Therapists in a variety of different settings while maintaining equity and equal representation within the mental health field.
- It protects consumers (clients/patients) and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: It will increase research + funding applied to fetal

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials

Role Tiffany Duong - Art Therapist + LPCC

Agency/Organization (If applicable)

Address Creative connections counseling

City and ZIP 1605 South cross Dr W

Burnsville MN 55306

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a member of the community in this way (e.g. parent, business owner, specific profession):

Retail worker

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed.
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other arts-based professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Bethany Urban

Role _____

Agency/Organization (If applicable) _____

Address _____

City and ZIP Eagan 55123

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a member of the community in this way (e.g. parent, business owner, specific profession):
Government Health Worker (Minnesota Department of Health)

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed.
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other arts-based professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,
Name & Credentials Angela Boice
Role Government Health Worker
Agency/Organization (If applicable) _____
Address 14209 E 143rd Ct
City and ZIP Burnsville, MN 55337

CC:
Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide. I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with a spectrum of cultural, racial, individual identities, and communities (i.e., BIPOC, LGBTQ+, English and Spanish speaking, low income). I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.

It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.

It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Caila Kritzeck, MA, LPCC, ATR

Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor and Registered Art Therapist

Art of Counseling, pllc. | 275 4th St. E. #301, St Paul 55101

CC: Vice Chair: Sen. Alice Mann Ranking Minority Member(s): Sen. Paul J. Utke DHS - Main
Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health:
Teresa Steinmetz Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo



CATHOLIC CHARITIES
Twin Cities

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

From:

Jessica Dreischmeier, MA, LMFT

Program Director, Children's Day Treatment

Catholic Charities Twin Cities

September 29, 2025

Dear Chair Backer and Chair Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota is at the forefront of the conversation.

As a mental health professional with a master's degree in art therapy, I have seen firsthand the healing potential of making art in a safe and curated expressive arts therapy session. My experience as an art therapist in the state of Minnesota has centered on the needs of youth who have experienced trauma and due to those traumatic experiences, have social, emotional and behavioral challenges that have become barriers to their access to an education and being part of their larger communities. Sometimes my clients' trauma has been so complex, and over so much time, that they do not have words to describe or verbally process what has happened to them. Art therapists, trained in building safe creative spaces, support clients in expressing those experiences while bearing witness to their pain- an important tenet of any trauma-healing work.

As you are likely aware, we are experiencing a children's mental health crisis in our state. To truly make an impact that will reach our youth & families, schools, hospitals and treatment facilities, we need to be making large, systemic level shifts such as recognizing and licensing clinical art therapy. As world renowned Dutch American psychiatrist and post-traumatic stress researcher Bessel van der Kolk tells us, "The Body Keeps the Score;" meaning we need to encourage the use of more diverse approaches to trauma treatment such as expressive arts-based interventions to promote transformational healing. Without clinical recognition and professional license for art therapists, we are at risk of missing out on access to this effective,



CATHOLIC CHARITIES
Twin Cities

ethical and evidence-based modality, in addition to the risk of untrained clinicians utilizing art interventions in ways that may cause harm, rather than support healing.

Children in Minnesota are witnessing gun violence at unprecedented levels, are navigating the negative effects of social media on their selves and their loved ones, and are especially vulnerable without your strong support for trauma-informed and ethical mental health systems in Minnesota. This issue touches all Minnesotans, your constituents and communities included.

I support the much-needed state licensure of clinical art therapy, and I urge our state's representatives to pass this legislation in support of the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,
Jessica Dreischmeier, MA, LMFT
Catholic Charities Twin Cities
Minneapolis, MN 55404
Jessica.Dreischmeier@cctwincities.org

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

My MN House Rep: Rep. Nolan West

DHS – Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS – Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a licensed mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: outpatient mental health

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Amanda Neumann MA CMFT

Title Therapist & Supervisor

Agency/Organization (If applicable) conscious healing counseling

Address 3200 main st NW

City and ZIP COON Rapids MN 55418

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a licensed mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: Children, teens, adults

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.

Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Sara Hensche

Title Unlicensed Therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Conscious Healing Counseling

Address 3200 Main St. NW, Coon Rapids, MN 55448

City and ZIP _____

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a licensed mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: Children, teens, eating disorders, adults, trauma

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Margaret Ives, MSW, LICSW

Title Mental Health Therapist

Agency/Organization (if applicable) Conscious Healing Counseling

Address 3200 Main St. NW Suite 255 Coon Rapids

City and ZIP Coon Rapids, MN 55448

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

Craig Balfany, ATR-BC, LPC
Adjunct Faculty
Minnesota State University Moorhead
Craig.balfany@mnstate.edu

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

From: Craig Balfany, ATR-BC, LPC

Dear Chair Backer and Chair Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota is at the forefront of the conversation.

I am a Registered and Board-Certified Art Therapist who has practiced in Minnesota for over 35 years. Throughout my experience, I have worked alongside art therapy providers in my clinical and educational roles. I have witnessed firsthand the benefits of art therapy as an effective intervention for individuals facing mental health issues, addictions, and traumatic brain injuries.

Art therapy offers a valuable opportunity for enhanced emotional regulation, improved social engagement, reduced behavioral issues, better symptom management, and a meaningful expression of hope. It has been instrumental in providing critical clinical insights that support treatment plans and care trajectories.

Art therapy has consistently encouraged clients to participate in group and treatment sessions with dedication. The non-threatening, creative, and interactive qualities of art therapy make it an appealing approach, increasing clients' willingness to engage in their therapeutic journey. Additionally, art therapy has played a significant role in bringing community members together. By participating in collaborative creative and expressive projects, individuals have found meaningful ways to process grief, loss, and experiences of social injustice. These opportunities for connection not only support personal healing but also strengthen community bonds during challenging times.

As a legislator, your constituent families and communities have benefited heavily from the services of art therapists and ongoing mental health support services in general in the last 5-10 years. Art therapists have supported individuals and communities throughout the state of Minnesota, from veterans returning home after service, incarcerated adults and teenagers, immigrants arriving in Minnesota, locals experiencing infrastructure failures, neighborhoods impacted by a large scale social community uprising in 2020, students and teachers during and after COVID-19 shut downs, many individuals experiencing personal loss or financial insecurity, and helping professionals who worked the frontlines during the pandemic. Your prominent and impactful voice in supporting mental health, especially for those in your districts and in our state, is essential in times of trauma and afterward.

Craig Balfany, ATR-BC, LPC
Adjunct Faculty
Minnesota State University Moorhead
Craig.balfany@mnstate.edu

I urge you to continue this support by expanding resources through the licensing of clinical art therapists. I support this bill and the much-needed state licensure of clinical art therapy. I urge you, our state's representatives, to do the same and recognize and protect the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,
Craig Balfany

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

My MN House Rep: Matt Norris

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: kids through adults - depression, anxiety, trauma, grief

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers (clients/patients) and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: clinical arts therapies (Art, music, etc) have been shown to reduce health care costs by supporting well-being

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Danielle Nicole Link, MM, MS, MT-BC, LPC

Role Mental Health Counselor, Music Therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Conscious Healing Counseling

Address 15243 Northman Blvd. NW

City and ZIP Ramsey MN 55303

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo



DREXEL UNIVERSITY

College of

**Nursing and
Health Professions**
Art Therapy and Counseling

October 20, 2025

To Whom it May Concern,
HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

From: Associate Professor Denise Wolf

Dear Chair Backer and Chair Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590**, which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I strongly support the professional recognition of art therapy and urge the state to uphold the ethical practice of this discipline during a time when mental health in Minnesota is at the forefront of public concern.

As a graduate art therapy educator and licensed, credentialed art therapist, I have practiced under licensure in Pennsylvania (9 years) and New Jersey (3 years), where I was among the first to obtain an art therapy-specific license. Licensure has had a profound positive impact on client outcomes and professional standards.

Throughout my career, I have collaborated with art therapy providers in diverse clinical settings including private practice, community mental health, residential treatment, and schools. I have witnessed firsthand how art therapy benefits individuals with trauma-related disorders, eating and feeding disorders, and neurological conditions. It fosters emotional regulation, social engagement, symptom management, and meaningful self-expression, while providing critical insights that inform treatment plans and care trajectories.

Research underscores these benefits. A meta-analysis of 50 studies involving 2,766 participants found that visual art therapy improved 18% of measured health outcomes, including emotional regulation and social functioning (Joschko et al., 2024). Narrative reviews highlight its effectiveness in reducing anxiety and depression symptoms, alleviating stress, and enhancing coping strategies, while supporting recovery from PTSD through safe, structured creative processes (Hiang, Fong, & Tripathi, 2025). Additionally, art therapy has achieved a 50% reduction in combat-related PTSD symptoms among U.S. veterans (Campbell et al., 2016). These outcomes demonstrate art therapy's critical role in motivating attendance and improving treatment adherence, making licensure essential for Minnesota's mental health system.

As a legislator, your constituent families and communities have benefited greatly from the services of art therapists and ongoing mental health support in the last 5–10 years. Art therapists have supported individuals and communities throughout Minnesota, from veterans returning home after service, incarcerated adults and teenagers, immigrants arriving in Minnesota, locals



DREXEL UNIVERSITY

College of

**Nursing and
Health Professions**
Art Therapy and Counseling

experiencing infrastructure failures, neighborhoods impacted by the large-scale social uprising in 2020, students and teachers during and after COVID-19 shutdowns, individuals experiencing personal loss or financial insecurity, and helping professionals who worked the frontlines during the pandemic. Your prominent and impactful voice in supporting mental health, especially for those in your districts and in the great state of Minnesota, is essential in times of trauma and recovery.

I urge you to continue this support by expanding resources through the licensing of clinical art therapists via your support of **HF 2590**. I support this bill and the much-needed state licensure of clinical art therapy. I urge you, the state's representatives, to do the same, recognizing and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Denise R Wolf ATR-BC, ATCS, LPC, LPAT
Associate Clinical Professor

CC:

Vice Chairs: Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS – Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS – Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

References

Campbell, M., Decker, K. P., Kruk, K., & Deaver, S. P. (2016). Art Therapy and Cognitive Processing Therapy for Combat-Related PTSD: A Randomized Controlled Trial. *Art Therapy, 33*(4), 169–177. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07421656.2016.1226643>

Hiang, K. S., Fong, C., & Tripathi, S. (2025). Art Therapy in Mental Health Treatment: A Narrative Review of Efficacy and Application in Developed Countries. *Psychology (Irvine, Calif.)*, *16*(2), 202–213. <https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2025.162012>

Joschko, R., Klatte, C., Grabowska, W. A., Roll, S., Berghöfer, A., & Willich, S. N. (2024). Active Visual Art Therapy and Health Outcomes: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *JAMA Network Open, 7*(9), Article 2428709. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.28709>

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: a non profit - children and their families

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
 - It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
 - It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
 - It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
 - Other: _____
-

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Erica Black, MA LMFT

Role Program Coordinator

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Greater MN Family Services

Address 2320 E Hwy 12, St 2

City and ZIP Willmar, MN 56283

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo



December 16, 2025

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of HF 2590 which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a member of the community in this way (e.g. parent, business owner, specific profession): **Artistic Director for Grand Marais Artist Colony**

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed.
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other arts-based professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.



PO Box 626,120 West 3rd Avenue | Grand Marais, Minnesota 55604
(218) 387-2737 | info@grandmaraisartcolony.org | grandmaraisartcolony.org



Sincerely,

Ruth Pszwaro
Artistic Director
Grand Marais Art Colony
120 West 3rd Avenue
Grand Marais, MN 55604

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo



PO Box 626, 120 West 3rd Avenue | Grand Marais, Minnesota 55604
(218) 387-2737 | info@grandmaraisartcolony.org | grandmaraisartcolony.org



Haley Fox, MA, LPCC, PhD, ATR-BCCS
Art | Wellness | Enlightenment (AWE)
477 Chisholm Trail, Forsyth, MO 65653
(612) 396-6905 | drhaleyfox@awe.ninja, haley@advancedpsychological.net

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

From: Haley Fox, MA, LPCC, PhD, ATR-BCCS
Telemental Health Psychotherapist
Advanced Psychological Services LLC
304 Belle Ave, Mankato, MN 56001
Phone: 507.769.0816 | Fax: 507.888.0001

Dear Chair Backer and Chair Bierman:

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota is at the forefront of the conversation.

I am a licensed professional clinical counselor (LPCC) and art therapist (ATR-BCCS) who has practiced in Minnesota for over 18 years. Throughout my experience, I have worked alongside art therapy providers in my clinical role as a psychotherapist, clinical supervisor and clinical director. I have witnessed firsthand the benefits of art therapy as an effective intervention for individuals facing a wide array of mental health challenges, including those living under a civil commitment status.

Art therapy offers a valuable opportunity for enhanced emotional regulation, improved social engagement, reduced behavioral issues, better symptom management, and a meaningful expression of hope. It has been instrumental in providing critical clinical insights that support treatment plans and care trajectories. Moreover, art therapy has positively motivated patients to attend groups and treatment sessions consistently, due to its non-threatening, creative, and interactive nature.

As a legislator, your constituent families and communities have benefited heavily from the services of art therapists and ongoing mental health support services in general in the last 5-10 years. Art therapists have supported individuals and communities throughout the state of Minnesota, from veterans returning home after service, incarcerated adults and teenagers, immigrants arriving in Minnesota, locals experiencing infrastructure failures, neighborhoods impacted by a large scale social community uprising in 2020, students and teachers during and after COVID-19 shut downs, many individuals experiencing personal loss or financial



Haley Fox, MA, LPCC, PhD, ATR-BCCS
Art | Wellness | Enlightenment (AWE)
477 Chisholm Trail, Forsyth, MO 65653
(612) 396-6905 | drhaleyfox@awe.ninja, haley@advancedpsychological.net

insecurity, and helping professionals who worked the frontlines during the pandemic. Your prominent and impactful voice in supporting mental health, especially for those in your districts and in our state, is essential in times of trauma and afterward.

I urge you to continue this support by expanding resources through the licensing of clinical art therapists. I support this bill, and the much-needed state licensure of clinical art therapy. I urge you, our state's representatives, to do the same and recognize and protect the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Haley Fox

Haley Fox, MA, LPCC, PhD
Board-certified art therapist and art therapy supervisor (ATR-BCCS)
Board-certified music therapist (MT-BC)
Registered Expressive Arts Therapist (REAT)
Telemental Health Provider (TMH-BC)
LPC (MO), LMHC (MA), LPCC (MN)
haley@advancedpsychological.net

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

Luke Frederick (DFL) District: 18B

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: _____

I am an occupational therapist and co-owner of a private practice that serves people of all ages, mostly identifying with the neurodivergent community (Autism, ADHD, and various co-occurring conditions including mental health conditions, physical disabilities, and intellectual disabilities).

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Michelle Pettit, MA, OTR/L

Role Occupational Therapist, Co-Owner

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Roots and Wings Therapeutic Services LLC

Address 11318 86th Ave N

City and ZIP Maple Grove, MN 55369

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:

Children, Adolescents, Adults

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely, Arlisay Barnes
Name & Credentials Arlisay J. Barnes, MA, ATR-P
Role Art Therapist
Agency/Organization (If applicable) Fairview Health Services / Charlie Health
Address 16560 Luther Way
City and ZIP Eden Prairie, MN 55346

CC:
Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:
Outpatient, Autism, ADHD, trauma, Anxiety, Depression, OCD etc.

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials

Role

Agency/Organization (If applicable)

Address

City and ZIP

Erin Dolan MS, ATR-BC, LPCC
Outpatient LPCC and Board certified/Registered Art Therapist
Choices Psychotherapy Ltd
10201 Wayzata Blvd Suite 1001
Minneapolis, MN 55432

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:

BIPOC, underrepresented, marginalized, communities
Adult - trauma survivors.

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: For an easy access to the AT services
for the marginalized communities.

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Maria K. Siddiqui, MA, ATR-BC, LPCC, NCC

Role Trauma-Informed Art Psychotherapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) The Luminous Mind

Address ~~131~~ Roseville

City and ZIP Roseville 55114

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:
Addiction, adolescents, teens, depression, PTSD, anxiety, autism, eating disorder

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: It helps more people access mental health care that works for and with them

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Natalie Dolezal, MA, ATR-P
Role Art therapy practitioner
Agency/Organization (If applicable) The Bloom Studio and Counseling Services LLC
Address 1605 Southcross drive, Suite 300
City and ZIP Burnsville, MN, 55306

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:

adults + children

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Arielle Weil, MA, ATR-P

Role art therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Conscious Healing Counseling

Address 3200 main st NW, Ste 255

City and ZIP Coon Rapids, MN 55448

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:

children and teens

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Rebecca Urban MA ATR-P

Role Art Therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Creative Connections Counseling LLC

Address 1650 Southcross Dr W

City and ZIP Burnsville 55306

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:

Kids, teen, women

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Carne Windett ATR-BC LPC

Role owner

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Be Still Art + Healing LLC

Address Lake Elmo, MN

City and ZIP _____

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:

Families, Couples, Individuals - 10yr+

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: Expands services for folks once Art T's can take insurance

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials

Role

Agency/Organization (If applicable)

Address

City and ZIP

Sarah Bowman, LMFT, ATR-BC
Art Therapist
Mental Health Counseling Services
615 1st Ave NE #310
Minneapolis, MN 55413

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:

children & adolescents needing mental health hospitalization

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: It affirms the value of nonverbal communication, processing, & expression

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Melody Rossiter, MA, ATR-P

Role inpatient art therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Fairview Riverside

Address 4060 Foss Rd

City and ZIP St. Anthony 55421

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a member of the community in this way (e.g. parent, business owner, specific profession):

HR Professional & Resident

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed.
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other arts-based professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: Other states have ~~good~~ this license, would be good to ensure same credentials exist across state lines

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Michaela Gunsear

Role HR Professional & Change Practitioner

Agency/Organization (If applicable) United Health Group

Address 13541 Lynn Avenue

City and ZIP Savage, MN 55378

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a member of the community in this way (e.g. parent, business owner, specific profession):

Resident

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed.
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other arts-based professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: Art is an innate human outlet, using it to grow as people requires professionals following standardized expectations.

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Matthew D Sweeney

Role _____

Agency/Organization (If applicable) _____

Address 13541 Lynn Ave.

City and ZIP Savage, MN 55378

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a member of the community in this way (e.g. parent, business owner, specific profession):

Resident

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed.
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other arts-based professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.

Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Bryan Dolezal

Role Husband of Art Therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) _____

Address 1540 Thomas Lake Pointe Rd Apt 313

City and ZIP Eagan, MN, 55122

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: Adolescents, Families, women, chemical dependency

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,
Name & Credentials

Heather D'Agostino MA

Role

Mental Health Practitioner

Agency/Organization (If applicable)

Address

City and ZIP

West St. Paul 55118

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: SUD program, Private Practice

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials: Heidi Pexa

Role: CMHC Student / Intern

Agency/Organization (If applicable): Adler Graduate Student

Address: 2621 199th St. E

City and ZIP: Knov Lake, MN 55372

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:

Substance use adults & teens, children, people w/ trauma experiences

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials

Amber Beesal, M.A. ATR-P

Role

Psychotherapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable)

Immerate Life Counseling

Address

1205 Grand Ave

City and ZIP

St. Paul, MN 55105

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:

adults with eating disorders

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Samra Hickey LPCC ATR
Role OP + group therapist
Agency/Organization (If applicable) The Emily Program
Address 17873 Elder Ave
City and ZIP Lakewood MN, 55044

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:
teens, Adults, older Adults, Caregivers, therapist for other Mental Health professionals

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Elliesha Hahn, ATR-BC, LPCC
Role CEO, Supervisor for LPCC & ATR-BC, & Art Therapist
Agency/Organization (If applicable) The Bloom Studio
Address 14299 Fisher Ave. NE, PL, MN 55372
City and ZIP _____

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:

0-100

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.

Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Carli Libby Arttherapy intern

Role _____

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Creative Connections

Address 3618 ME Minneapolis, MN 55418

City and ZIP McKinley St

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:
adults, teenagers, anxiety, depression, autism, + ADHD

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Brianna Reed, MA, LPCC, ATR-BC
Role Art therapist supervisor + Practice owner
Agency/Organization (If applicable) Creative Connections Counseling LLC
Address 1605 Southcross Drive West,
City and ZIP Burnsville, MN 55306

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapy graduate student living and studying in Minnesota. I chose the field of art therapy because: I believe in the power of nonverbal expression.

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for newly graduated students to work and practice as Art Therapists in a variety of different settings while maintaining equity and equal representation within the mental health field.
- It protects consumers (clients/patients) and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.

Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Liz Cannon BA
Role Clinical Art Therapy Intern
Agency/Organization (If applicable) Summer Counseling
Address _____
City and ZIP ST. PAUL MN. 55104

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapy ~~graduate~~ student living and studying in Minnesota. I chose the field of art therapy because: I've seen the ways in which people connect with art + art in a therapeutic setting, and it is more powerful & effective for some than words + traditional therapy ever were. ~~especially~~ ITS NOT A I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because: want, its a NEED

- It increases opportunities for newly graduated students to work and practice as Art Therapists in a variety of different settings while maintaining equity and equal representation within the mental health field.
- It protects consumers (clients/patients) and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: It increases the amount of art therapists and can get certified by removing geographic location as a barrier.

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Olivia Bailey

Role Student

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Bethel University

Address 5021 Xkimo Ct. NW

City and ZIP Ramsey, 5523

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapy ^{under-}graduate student living and studying in Minnesota. I chose the field of art therapy because: I love that art can be used to heal and create community. It can make a difference!

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for newly graduated students to work and practice as Art Therapists in a variety of different settings while maintaining equity and equal representation within the mental health field.
- It protects consumers (clients/patients) and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Eleanora Pehrson

Role Undergraduate Student

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Bethel University

Address 3900 Bethel Dr, ~~St Paul~~

City and ZIP St. Paul, MN 55112

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a member of the community in this way (e.g. parent, business owner, specific profession):

Property Manager

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed.
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other arts-based professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.

Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Rebecca Kinsey

Role Therapy Patient

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Therapy Patient

Address 2353 Youngman Ave #116

City and ZIP Saint Paul MN 55114

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of HF 2590 which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:

Adults in outpatient clinic

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.

It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.

It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.

Other: **I have direct knowledge of other mental health therapists without master's level training in Art Therapy who list art therapy as an area of expertise when all they offer are art materials and directives downloaded from the internet. They also use client drawings to analyze them, which can be harmful and muddy the waters of what Art Therapy truly has to offer. When I have brought my concerns to clinic administration, they don't see this usurping of the profession as an issue.**

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials: **Mara Coyle MEd MA LPCC ATR**

Role: **Outpatient Mental Health Therapist**

Agency/Organization: **Sagent Behavioral Health (Formerly Nystrom Counseling & Associates**

Address: **1856 Beam Avenue**

City and ZIP: **Maplewood, MN 55109**

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus

*Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences
Medical School*

*F282/2A West
2450 Riverside Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55454-1495
TEL: 612-273-9800*

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

From: Dr. Lidia Zylowska M.D

Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences Associate Professor /

University of Minnesota Medical School

M Health Fairview / Riverside Psychiatry Clinic

Member at the Earl E. Bakken Center for Spirituality and Healing

Dear Chair Backer and Chair Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota is at the forefront of the conversation.

I am a licensed psychiatrist who has practiced in Minnesota for over 7 years.

Throughout my experience, I have worked alongside art therapy providers in my clinical role as outpatient clinician. I have witnessed firsthand the benefits of art therapy as an effective intervention for individuals facing adult Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD).

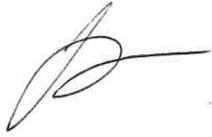
Art therapy offers a valuable opportunity for enhanced emotional regulation, improved social engagement, reduced behavioral issues, better symptom management, and a meaningful expression of hope. It has been instrumental in providing critical clinical insights that support treatment plans and care trajectories.

Moreover, art therapy has positively motivated patients to attend groups and treatment sessions consistently, due to its non-threatening, creative, and interactive nature.

As a legislator, your constituent families and communities have benefited heavily from the services of art therapists and ongoing mental health support services in general in the last 5-10 years. Art therapists have supported individuals and communities throughout the state of Minnesota, from veterans returning home after service, incarcerated adults and teenagers, immigrants arriving in Minnesota, locals experiencing infrastructure failures, neighborhoods impacted by a large-scale social community uprising in 2020, students and teachers during and after COVID-19 shut downs, many individuals experiencing personal loss or financial insecurity, and helping professionals who worked the frontlines during the pandemic. Your prominent and impactful voice in supporting mental health, especially for those in your districts and in our state, is essential in times of trauma and afterward.

I urge you to continue this support by expanding resources through the licensing of clinical art therapists. I support this bill, and the much-needed state licensure of clinical art therapy. I urge you, our state's representatives, to do the same and recognize and protect the professional and

ethical practice of art therapy.
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Lidia Zylowska', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dr. Lidia Zylowska M.D
Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences Associate Professor /
University of Minnesota Medical School
M Health Fairview / Riverside Psychiatry Clinic
Member at the Earl E. Bakken Center for Spirituality and Healing

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: private practice working with children and adults.

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
 - It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
 - It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
 - It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
 - Other: _____
-

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Joseph Collins, PhD LPCC

Role Owner and Clinician

Agency/Organization (If applicable) JC Counseling

Address 9395 Esk Lane

City and ZIP Inver Grove Hts, 55077

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo



www.sacredstoriesmn.org

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

From: Jade Erickson, LICSW
Psychotherapist, Educator, Social Worker

October 1, 2025

Dear Chair Backer and Chair Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota is at the forefront of the conversation.

I am a psychotherapist, social worker, and educator who has practiced in Minnesota for over fifteen years. In my practice working with adults who have experienced complex trauma and grief, I can say with confidence that having the option to refer clients to therapists who are specifically trained as an art therapist has enhanced holistic healing and enhanced the lives of many individuals in Minnesota. I am trained in many modalities, and sometimes my modalities just are not the right fit. It has been tremendous to partner with art therapists to provide holistic healing in a way that my other modalities have fallen short. It is my fear that if art therapists are not able to protect their practice, it allows anyone who “thinks” they know what art therapy is be able to market themselves as such and potentially put people at risk of harm.

As a legislator, your constituent families and communities have benefited heavily from the services of art therapists and ongoing mental health support services in general in the last 5-10 years. Your prominent and impactful voice in supporting mental health, especially for those in your districts and in our state, is essential in times of trauma and afterward.

I urge you to continue this support by expanding resources through the licensing of clinical art therapists.

Sincerely,
Jade Erickson, LICSW
www.sacredstoriesmn.org
612-712-4066
jade@therapy-mn.com

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: Children

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
 - It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
 - It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
 - It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
 - Other: _____
-

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Jessica Peterson, Student at Central Lakes College Brainerd, Psychology Pathway Transfer

Role Psychology Student, Personal Care Attendant, Mother

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Golden Heart

Address 5696 Fairview Road

City and ZIP Baxter 56425

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo



SF 1675 & HF 2590

Senate Health & Human Services & House Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: Favorable

Date: 11/24/25

Testimonial from Jessica Waldron, LMFT, ATR-BC
Clinical Program Therapist
Behavior Support Team

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in full support of SF 1675 and HF 2590, which would establish licensure for clinical art therapy in Minnesota.

I am a licensed mental health professional working full-time in the Forensic Mental Health Program in St. Peter, Minnesota. In this role, I have provided individual and group therapy to patients across a range of ages and genders. I also facilitate art therapy groups within our Behavior Support Team Day Programming for individuals requiring intensive skills development, and I provide individual art therapy services by referral for trauma processing and emotional regulation. Additionally, I have supervised three art therapy interns in this setting.

Through this work, I have seen firsthand how art therapy allows patients to process trauma and intense emotions when traditional talk therapy is insufficient. Patients consistently report that art therapy gives them a means of communication when they are unable to express themselves verbally. Interns have also noted the value of developing creative and adaptive approaches when working in a secure, forensic environment. Art therapy has supported patients in building strengths, developing emotional insight, and making meaningful progress in treatment.

I strongly support clinical art therapy licensure to further strengthen the mental health workforce and expand access to this critical modality. Art therapists are master's-level clinicians trained to assess, diagnose, and treat psychological, behavioral, and cognitive conditions, comparable to other licensed mental health professionals. In forensic settings, licensure would support the creation and funding of additional art therapy positions, allowing more patients to benefit from this modality—particularly those who struggle with talk-based interventions. Art therapy is often essential for processing grief, loss, and the challenges of long-term commitment or incarceration.

During a time when mental health needs in Minnesota far exceed the number of available practitioners, it is vital that the State support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy through licensure.

Professional Testimony

Please feel free to contact me if you need any further information.

Respectfully,

Jessica Waldron, LMFT, ATR-BC

Jessica Waldron, LMFT, ATR-BC
LMFT Minnesota License #3606
Behavioral Specialist/Clinical Program Therapist 4
Direct Care and Treatment-Forensic Mental Health Program

Jessica Hansen, Art Therapist at Art Therapy of MN
jessicahansen@lanternsglowarttherapy.com

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

From: Jessica Hansen, LPC, ATR-P

Dear Chair Backer and Chair Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota is at the forefront of the conversation.

I am an art therapist practicing in Minnesota. I graduated from my masters program in 2022 and have been working in the field since then. I have seen firsthand how art therapy can facilitate communication, regulation, expression, and meaning-making. I have seen its efficacy with children and adults, across cultural backgrounds, across varied neurotypes, and for those managing varied mental health conditions. Moreover, art therapy has positively motivated clients to attend groups and treatment sessions consistently, due to its non-threatening, creative, and interactive nature.

Licensing Clinical Art Therapy in Minnesota would ensure this specialized service, which has been so beneficial, continues to be an option for Minnesotans. It would protect the public from untrained individuals marketing services as art therapy, and provide them with the information they need to make more informed decisions on their choice of providers.

As a legislator, your constituent families and communities have benefited heavily from the services of art therapists and ongoing mental health support services in general in the last 5-10 years. Art therapists have supported individuals and communities throughout the state of Minnesota, from veterans returning home after service, incarcerated adults and teenagers, immigrants arriving in Minnesota, locals experiencing infrastructure failures, neighborhoods impacted by a large scale social community uprising in 2020, students and teachers during and after COVID-19 shut downs, many individuals experiencing personal loss or financial insecurity, and helping professionals who worked the frontlines during the pandemic. Your prominent and impactful voice in supporting mental health, especially for those in your districts and in our state, is essential in times of trauma and afterward.

I urge you to continue this support by expanding resources through the licensing of clinical art therapists. I support this bill, and the much-needed state licensure of clinical art therapy. I urge you, our state's representatives, to do the same and recognize and protect the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Jessica Hansen, LPC, ATR-P



Jessica Hansen, Art Therapist at Art Therapy of MN
jessicahansen@lanternsglowarttherapy.com

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

My MN House Rep: Rep. Mike Freiberg

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

Audit trail

Details

FILE NAME 2025 Letters of Support HF 2590 draft.docx - 10/22/25, 3:40 PM

STATUS ● Signed

STATUS TIMESTAMP 2025/10/22
20:41:35 UTC

Activity



SENT

jessicahansen@lanternsglowarttherapy.com **sent** a signature request to:
• Jessica Hansen (jessicahansen@lanternsglowarttherapy.com)

2025/10/22
20:40:35 UTC



SIGNED

Signed by Jessica Hansen (jessicahansen@lanternsglowarttherapy.com)

2025/10/22
20:41:35 UTC



COMPLETED

This document has been signed by all signers and is **complete**

2025/10/22
20:41:35 UTC

The email address indicated above for each signer may be associated with a Google account, and may either be the primary email address or secondary email address associated with that account.

HF 2590

House Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

September 16th, 2025

Dear Chair Backer and Chair Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota is at the forefront of the conversation.

I am a Board-Certified Art Therapist in Minnesota, and I have been practicing for 13 years. I have seen first-hand how powerful engaging in art processes with a trained art therapist can be for my autistic clients and clients with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Many clients I have worked with sought out art therapy because traditional talk therapy did not help them to the extent that they had hoped. Similarly with the parents of autistic children or children with ADHD. During sessions with my art therapy clients, I've witnessed art processes allow for expression and communication when words would not come. I've also seen many clients become physically and emotionally regulated after having engaged in an art process, when talking increased dysregulation.

As a legislator, your constituent families and communities have benefited from art therapy and ongoing mental health support services heavily in the previous decade. Ranging from veterans returning home after service, immigrants arriving in Minnesota, locals experiencing infrastructure failures, a large-scale social community uprising, shootings, COVID-19 shutdowns, losses, and front-line workers serving us during the pandemic- your prominent and impactful voice in supporting mental health in times of trauma is crucial.

I support the much-needed state licensure of clinical art therapy, and I urge our state's representatives to pass this legislation in support of the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,
Jocelyn Thoemke, LMFT, ATR-BC,
Jocelyn Thoemke LLC

2637 27th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55406
hearthealing777@gmail.com

JOCELYN THOEMKE, LMFT, ATR-BC

Board Certified Art Therapist & Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

2637 27TH AVE. S. Suite 240, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55406 P: 612.758.0155
F: 612.416-8167 EM: hearthealing777@gmail.com

2637 27TH AVE. S. Suite 240, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55406 P: 612.758.0155 F: 612.416.8167 EM: hearthealing777@gmail.com

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a licensed mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: Individuals, children, teens, adults, & families

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Jordan Cole, MS

Title Therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Conscious Healing Counseling

Address 3200 Main St NW Suite 255 Coon Rapids, MN 55418

City and ZIP _____

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo



SF 1675 & HF 2590

Senate Health & Human Services & House Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: Favorable

Date: 11/24/25

Testimonial from Jessica Waldron, LMFT, ATR-BC
Licensed Therapist

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in full support of SF 1675 and HF 2590, which would establish licensure for clinical art therapy in Minnesota.

I am a licensed mental health professional working part-time at the Greater Minnesota Trauma Center (GMNTC) in St. Peter, where I provide art therapy to children, adolescents, and adults in a private practice setting. In addition to clinical work, I also provide supervision to mental health interns and pre-licensed professionals.

Through my experience, I have seen how art therapy enables clients to process trauma and intense emotions when traditional talk therapy is not effective. Clients consistently report that art therapy offers them a means of communication when they are unable to verbalize their feelings. I have observed children use art to express grief and loss, helping them move forward in healthy ways. I have seen a client with autism use creative expression to demonstrate social skills and positive peer interaction, and I have watched teens become more open and engaged when given an alternative, nonverbal outlet. Art therapy helps clients build strengths, develop emotional insight, and make meaningful progress in treatment.

I strongly support clinical art therapy licensure to strengthen Minnesota's mental health workforce and expand access to this essential modality. Art therapists are master's-level clinicians trained to assess, diagnose, and treat psychological, behavioral, and cognitive conditions, equivalent to other licensed mental health professionals. In community and rural settings, art therapy is especially valuable for clients who struggle with traditional therapeutic approaches.

At a time when mental health needs far exceed available resources—particularly in rural Minnesota—it is critical for the State to support the ethical and professional practice of art therapy through licensure. Licensure would help attract more qualified art therapists to underserved areas and increase access to effective, creative, and trauma-informed care.

Thank you for your consideration. I welcome any additional questions or requests for information.



Respectfully,

Jessica Waldron, LMFT, ATR-BC

Jessica Waldron, LMFT, ATR-BC

LMFT Minnesota License #3606

Licensed Therapist/MN Board Approved Supervisor for LMFT/LPCC/LPC

Greater Minnesota Trauma Center (GMNTC)

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of HF 2590 which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:
Adult cancer patients as well as adolescent and adults in a mental health outpatient setting

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
 - It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
 - It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
 - Other: Creating more accessibility for all populations
-
-

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials: *Katie Kinzer, M.A., ATR-BC, LPCC*

Title: *Board Certified Registered Art Therapist/Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor*

Role: *Art Therapist/Outpatient Therapist*

Agency/Organization (If applicable): *The Coborn Healing Center/Psychotherapeutic Resources*

Address: *Healing Center, 1900 Centracare Circe, St. Cloud, MN 56303*

Address 2: *Psychotherapeutic Resources, 1411 W. Saint Germain Street, St. Cloud, MN 56301*

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: _____ Children in mental health _____

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers (clients/patients) and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,
Name & Credentials __Katy Lentz, MSW, LGSW, CTRS_____
Role _____Associate Psychotherapist_____
Agency/Organization (If applicable) _____Clara's House_____
Address __1564 Cty Rd 134_____
City and ZIP __St. Cloud, MN 56303_____

CC:
Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:
Children and adolescents (3-18 years old) in a partial hospitalization setting

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
 - It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
 - It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
 - Other: I see first hand the positive difference art therapy makes.
-

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials KayLee Jurek, MA, ATR-P

Role Art Therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Centracare: Clara's House

Address 1564 Co Rd 134

City and ZIP St Cloud, MN 56303

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
House Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

From: Kim Grantier - kim@kimgrantier.com

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota is at the forefront of the conversation.

I am an art therapist who has practiced in Minnesota for 3 years. Throughout my experience, I have witnessed firsthand the benefits of art therapy as an effective intervention for individuals facing depression, anxiety, mood disorders, and recovery from eating disorders and drug and alcohol use.

Art therapy offers a valuable opportunity for enhanced emotional regulation, improved social engagement, reduced behavioral issues, better symptom management, and a meaningful expression of hope. It has been instrumental in providing critical clinical insights that support treatment plans and care trajectories.

Moreover, art therapy has positively motivated patients to attend groups and treatment sessions consistently, due to its non-threatening, creative, and interactive nature. I lead youth and adult art therapy groups that help with individual and community learning, healing, and growth.

As a legislator, your constituent families and communities have benefited heavily from the services of art therapists and ongoing mental health support services in general in the last 5-10 years. Art therapists have supported individuals and communities throughout the state of Minnesota, from veterans returning home after service, incarcerated adults and teenagers, immigrants arriving in Minnesota, locals experiencing infrastructure failures, neighborhoods impacted by a large scale social community uprising in 2020, students and teachers during and after COVID-19 shut downs, many individuals experiencing personal loss or financial insecurity, and helping professionals who worked the frontlines during the pandemic. Your prominent and impactful voice in supporting mental health, especially for those in your districts and in our state, is essential in times of trauma and afterward.

I urge you to continue this support by expanding resources through the licensing of clinical art therapists. I support this bill, and the much-needed state licensure of clinical art therapy. I urge you, our state's representatives, to vote for this bill to recognize and protect the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,
Kim Grantier, MA, ATR-BC

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
My Representative: Rep Emma Greenman
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo



Art Heals, Creative Space
Therapy & Wellness
Krista Zeiter, MA, ATR-BC
www.AhCreativeSpace.com

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

From: Krista Wanous-Zeiter, MA, ATR-BC
KristaZeiter@gmail.com

Dear Chair Backer and Chair Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota is at the forefront of the conversation.

I am a Board Certified Art Therapist who has practiced in Minnesota for over 8 years. Throughout my experience, I have worked as an art therapy professional and clinical provider at Hazelden Youth Addiction and Recovery Center, The Emily Program for Eating Disorder Recovery, and now in my own private practice as owner and Board Certified Art Therapist providing healing arts and wellness. I have witnessed firsthand the benefits of art therapy as an effective intervention for individuals facing anxiety, depression, trauma recovery, PTSD, eating disorders at all levels of severity, addiction, adoption and estranged family communication, and overall personal wellbeing, self regulation and personal understanding. Art Therapy is truly a modality that can meet clients across the spectrum of mental or physical health and care.

Molly's Story

(A real client case study, client permission given to share for the efforts of Art Therapy Licensing)

“Molly” is a 35-year-old woman with a history of childhood sexual trauma. She had previously engaged in 15 years of traditional talk therapy, which included periods of being in and out of hospital level programs, that successfully provided cognitive understanding of her trauma but limited emotional and physical resolution. She reported difficulty accessing and verbalizing affective material, and ongoing feelings of dependency on her therapist for emotional regulation and validation.

Presenting Concerns:

Although Molly "successfully" completed programming many times, she continued to present with symptoms consistent with posttraumatic stress, including intrusive memories, chronic shame, emotional numbing, and self-blame. She also expressed a desire to strengthen her internal resources and reduce reliance on external validation. She continued to seek out therapy weekly and seek psychiatric care multiple times a year.

Art Therapy Process:

Initial sessions focused on sensory grounding through nonverbal artmaking — including use of clay, watercolor, and mixed-media collage — to increase tolerance for affective states and sensations in the body. As our therapeutic alliance developed, Molly began using imagery to represent feelings and body sensations rather than direct narrative disclosure.

Art-based interventions allowed access to implicit and pre-verbal memory systems, promoting integration between emotional, somatic, and cognitive experience. This process supported the emergence of self-compassion and reduced avoidance or distractive behaviors.

Over time, the client transitioned from trauma-centered imagery to work that explored self-soothing, boundaries, and personal empowerment. Through artmaking, she developed a visual language for understanding and regulating her internal experience.

Outcomes:

After approximately nine months of consistent art therapy, Molly demonstrated:

- Increased emotional regulation and affect tolerance
- Decreased trauma-related avoidance and hyperarousal symptoms
- Improved self-efficacy and internalized sense of safety
- Reduced dependency on external validation for self-worth
- Sustained use of art as an independent coping and self-coping tool
- Client reduced need for therapy from weekly to monthly due to increase in self-coping
- Client reduced medication dosage by 50% due to increased ability to self-regulate

Summary:

In this case, art therapy provided access to nonverbal and sensory pathways essential for processing early trauma and growing new neuro-pathways that help them actually recover from it. The creative process supported emotional growth not just tolerance, self-expression, nervous system regulation, and integration of fragmented experiences, resulting in measurable improvement in self-efficacy and emotional autonomy.

Molly's story is the story of so many of the clients I have seen be impacted by the power of art therapy when done with an ethical and clinically educated approach.

My Story

I am personally advocating for the advancement of Art Therapy Licensure because of my experience as a business owner and clinician. When I entered grad school, I came with the intention to be an Art Therapist and only do that work. It quickly became clear after starting the



Art Heals, Creative Space
Therapy & Wellness
Krista Zeiter, MA, ATR-BC
www.AhCreativeSpace.com

program, that was not possible in our state, and I would have to split my education and professional credentialing into two tracks, Art Therapy and also Marriage and Family Therapy. I never intended to be a Marriage and Family Therapist and still do not feel that my work focuses on Marriage or Family Therapy. I feel I am an Art Therapist and I have successfully attained the highest level of credentialing for it, ART-BC.

I have submitted all my clinical hours for licensure to the MFT board but I don't plan on taking their board examination to complete my LMFT because I don't align with that as my work. I am a true Art Therapist, not a therapist who uses coloring in session. I provide deep somatic, trauma informed, polyvagal, sensorimotor regulation and recovery. My work looks very different when compared to an MFT. I only maintain connection with the MFT board in order to be seen as a "professional" by my peers. I have done all the same work, if not **double** the work in my clinical training, that an MFT would have to complete, yet I still cannot have access to insurance paneling for my clients because my state doesn't recognize my work as clinical on its own without the guise of LMFT. As a professional I feel like I have to hide or mask my real work in order to fit with an outdated system and recognition of what is care and how healing works in the whole body.

I urge you to continue this support by expanding resources through the licensing of clinical art therapists. I support this bill, and the much-needed state licensure of clinical art therapy. I urge you, our state's representatives, to do the same and recognize and protect the professional and ethical practice of art therapy. Our clients deserve access to Art Therapy and the financial aid that insurance provides to access it.

Sincerely,
Kirsta Wanous-Zeiter
Art Heals, LLC
KristaZeiter@gmail.com
www.AhCreativeSpace.com

CC:
Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:
Child, Teen, Adult Trauma, Eating Disorders, Spiritual Abuse, Anxiety, Depression, Self Harm

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: We provide a service unique and different from our LMFT, LICSW, or LPCC colleagues.

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Krista Wanous - Zeiter, MA, ATR-BC

Role Private Practice Owner and Clinical Art Therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Art Heals, Therapy and Wellness

Address 13904 144th Ave N

City and ZIP Dayton 55327

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: kids, teens, and adults experiencing
pmi diagnoses

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art-therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials brave Nieman, MA

Role Mental Health Professional

Agency/Organization (If applicable) People Incorporated

Address 3850 plumouth Blvd #109

City and ZIP Plumouth MA 05446

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: **Teresa Steinmetz**
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: **Landyn Prescott-Miles**
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: **Samantha Strehlo**

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: Kids, Teens, adults, Families and couples experiencing SPM2 SMI Diagnosis

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Jennifer Staley, MS, MENTAL HEALTH Therapist

Role MFT Clinical Trainer

Agency/Organization (If applicable) People Incorporated

Address 17490 Pond Circle

City and ZIP Eden Prairie 55346

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: Kids, teens, and adults
experiencing SPMI & SMI diagnoses

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Mara Limbeck, MSW, LICSW

Role Mental Health Professional

Agency/Organization (If applicable) People Incorporated

Address 2100 31st Ave S

City and ZIP Minneapolis 55406

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

From: Nicole 'Nikki' Kutil, MS, ATR-BC, LPCC

Dear Chair Backer and Chair Bierman,

Please accept this letter in full support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy with licensure, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota is at the forefront of the conversation.

I am a Board Certified Registered Art Therapist who has practiced for 7 years in the state of Minnesota. Throughout my experience, I have worked alongside art therapy providers in my clinical roles and have provided supervision to art therapy clinical trainees. I have witnessed firsthand the efficacy and benefits of art therapy for individuals facing depression, suicidal ideation, self-injurious behaviors, anxiety, and trauma in both group and individual sessions across multiple levels of care.

Art therapy offers a valuable opportunity for enhanced emotional regulation, improved social engagement, reduced behavioral issues, and a meaningful expression of hope. It has been instrumental in providing critical clinical insights that support treatment plans and care trajectories.

I strongly support clinical art therapy licensure to further strengthen the mental health workforce and expand access to this critical modality. Art therapists are master's-level clinicians trained to assess, diagnose, and treat psychological, behavioral, and cognitive conditions, comparable to other licensed mental health professionals. In Community-Based Mental Health settings, licensure would support the creation and funding of additional art therapy positions, allowing more clients to access to supportive care. Art therapy is often essential for those who struggle with talk-based interventions.

Art therapy has consistently encouraged clients to participate in group and individual treatment sessions with dedication. The non-threatening, creative, and interactive qualities of art therapy make it an appealing approach, increasing clients' willingness to engage in their therapeutic journey. Additionally, art therapy has played a significant role in healing communities. By participating in collaborative, creative, and expressive projects, individuals have found meaningful ways to process grief, loss, and experiences of social injustice. These therapeutic opportunities for connection not only support personal healing but also strengthen community bonds during challenging times and collective trauma.

As a legislator, your constituent families and communities have benefited heavily from the services of art therapists and ongoing mental health support services in general in the last 5-10 years. Art therapists have supported individuals and communities throughout the state of Minnesota, from veterans returning home after service; incarcerated adults and teenagers; refugees arriving in Minnesota; locals experiencing infrastructure failures; neighborhoods impacted by a large scale social community uprising in 2020; students, teachers, and frontline professionals during and after COVID-19 shut downs; many individuals experiencing personal loss or financial insecurity; students, parents, and teachers in the aftermath of gun violence; and neighbors within the collective trauma within Minneapolis. Your prominent and impactful voice in supporting mental health, especially for those in your districts and in our state, is essential during these times.

I urge you to continue this support by expanding resources through the licensing of clinical art therapists. I support this bill and the much-needed state licensure of clinical art therapy. I urge you, our state's representatives, to do the same and recognize and protect the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,
Nikki Kutil

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

My MN House Rep: Matt Norris

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: inpatient mental health with
adolescents ages 13-17.

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Dillon Krupa, Psychiatric Associate

Role Psychiatric Associate

Agency/Organization (If applicable) M Health Fairview

Address 2450 Riverside Ave.

City and ZIP Minneapolis, MN, 55454

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: Pediatric inpatient mental health

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Emily Grahwal, MS, BCBA, LBA

Role Behavior Analyst

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Fairview

Address 2450 Riverside Ave

City and ZIP Minneapolis, 55454

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: child/adolescent, mental health, autism, behavioral, developmental disabilities

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials NICOLE NELSON, MS, BCBA, LBA

Role Board Certified Behavior Analyst

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Fairview

Address 606 24th Ave S #700

City and ZIP Minneapolis, MN 55454

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: Child and Adolescent

Inpatient Mental Health + Clinical Education of Healthcare Professionals.

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: Many mental health populations need qualified art professionals to assist in a therapeutic creative outlet.

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Morgan Bilz, B.S., Psychiatric Associate

Role Psychiatric Associate + Behavioral Emergency Response Instructor

Agency/Organization (If applicable) M Health Fairview

Address 2450 Riverside Ave

City and ZIP Minneapolis, MN 55454

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations:

Inpatient Mental Health
Behavioral Emergency Response Team (BERT)

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Daniel Ugwumba RN

Role Registered Nurse

Agency/Organization (If applicable) _____

Address _____

City and ZIP _____

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: Adults, Children, Adolescents
health care / hosp. / int. treatment

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials FOWSJO ABDELLE, LGSW

Role Psycho ~~Therapist~~ of CTC, social worker

Agency/Organization (If applicable) M Leath Park

Address 2450 Riverside Ave, #1

City and ZIP Minneapolis, MN 55454

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: Child and Adolescent Mental Health unit

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials

Alice Murangiri (BSN)

Role

RN

Agency/Organization (If applicable)

Fairview Hospital (Mn)

Address

17655 65th Place North

City and ZIP

Maple Grove, Mn 55311

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: I am a small group private practice owner. We serve individuals, couples, and groups through a variety of modalities adjusted to uniquely fit each situation to optimize results for mental health growth.

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Lori Brown-De Alba, MA, LMFT

Role Practice Owner, Mental Health Professional, Clinical Supervisor

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Embrace & Empower Mental Health PLLC

Address 508 3rd St SE

City and ZIP Osseo, MN 55369

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

October 29, 2025

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dr. Megan E. Voss, DNP, CNP

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

M Health Fairview | Riverside Psychiatry Clinic

Director of Education & Associate Professor, Earl E. Bakken Center for Spirituality & Healing

Clinical Adjunct Professor, School of Nursing

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Dear Chair Backer and Chair Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota is at the forefront of the conversation.

I am a doctorally prepared nurse with advanced training in integrative therapies and healing modalities as well as board certification as a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner. I have practiced in Minnesota for nearly twenty years. Throughout my experience, I have worked alongside art therapy providers in my clinical roles in oncology and mental health. I have witnessed firsthand the benefits of art therapy as an effective intervention for individuals facing neurodevelopmental disorders, depression, anxiety, and most poignantly, those seeking accessible forms of emotional expression at the end of their lives. During my time as the director of an integrative therapy program for children undergoing hematopoietic stem cell transplant at the University of Minnesota Masonic Children's hospital (2014-2021), I witnessed first hand the healing power of Art therapy. The young children I worked with suffered significant medical trauma, often spent more than three months under intense medical care, and faced a mortality rate of at least 30% and some diseases nearly 100%. When an art therapist joined our team, it was astounding to see the therapeutic benefit. Many children looked forward to engaging their brains in ways that were both therapeutic and intellectually stimulating. Art therapy promoted family connection and expression of grief, fears, and love.

While the benefits of art therapy are numerous, it is only through a pathway to licensure that we can ensure our most vulnerable patients are protected. Licensure would help uphold the highest standards of training and ethics in practice. It also has the potential to make the provision of art therapy services more financially accessible and sustainable for families in need.

Art therapy offers a valuable opportunity for enhanced emotional regulation, improved social engagement, reduced behavioral issues, better symptom management, and a meaningful expression of hope. It has been instrumental in providing critical clinical insights that support treatment plans and care trajectories.

Moreover, art therapy has positively motivated patients to attend groups and treatment sessions consistently, due to its non-threatening, creative, and interactive nature

As a legislator, your constituent families and communities have benefited heavily from the services of art therapists and ongoing mental health support services in general in the last 5-10 years. Art therapists have supported individuals and communities throughout the state of Minnesota, from veterans returning home after service, incarcerated adults and teenagers, immigrants arriving in Minnesota, locals experiencing infrastructure failures, neighborhoods impacted by a large scale social community uprising in 2020, students and teachers during and after COVID-19 shut downs, many individuals experiencing personal loss or financial insecurity, and helping professionals who worked the frontlines during the pandemic. Your prominent and impactful voice in supporting mental health, especially for those in your districts and in our state, is essential in times of trauma and afterward.

I urge you to continue this support by expanding resources through the licensing of clinical art therapists. I support this bill, and the much-needed state licensure of clinical art therapy. I urge you, our state's representatives, to do the same and recognize and protect the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,



Dr. Megan E. Voss, DNP, CNP
Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
M Health Fairview | Riverside Psychiatry Clinic
Director of Education & Associate Professor, Earl E. Bakken Center for Spirituality & Healing
Clinical Adjunct Professor, School of Nursing
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

- o CC:
- o Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
- o Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
- o MN House Rep: Emma Greenman
- o DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
- o DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
- o Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
- o Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:
Adult with complex PTSD, Chronic illness, grief, loss, trauma, anxiety, depression, and life transitions.

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: This will enable increasing earning potential and enable insurance reimbursement, while also protecting the public by ensuring qualified professionals that provide credentialed Art Therapy services.

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Melissa Turgeon, MPS, LPC, ATR-BC, CCLS

Role Therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Lynlake Psychotherapy and Wellness

Address 621 West Lake Street, Suite 350

City and ZIP Minneapolis, Minnesota 55408

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a licensed mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: children & men's issues

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: we desperately need more mental health professionals, & this is a golden opportunity.

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials

max utenberg, PhD, LPCC

Title

Therapist in private practice, adjunct faculty at St. Mary's

Agency/Organization (If applicable)

Address

6328 Barnie Rd #2E

City and ZIP

Edina, MN 55435

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a licensed mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: midlife women & seniors

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Sherry L. M. Merriam, MA, LPCC-S

Title owner, psychotherapist, clinical supervisor

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Adolescent Care Collaborative

Address 3759 Pleasant Ave, #205

City and ZIP Minneapolis, MN 55409

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a licensed mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: children, teens, & their families

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: promotes more mental health resources in a time where our country is desperate for healing.

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Laura Beth Gatzke, LPCC

Title clinical mental health therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Framecare

Address 9675 Woodlawn Place N.

City and ZIP Champlin MN 55316

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a licensed mental health professional in ^{Wisconsin} Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: and plan to get licensed in Minnesota. Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder and persons with behavioral challenges. I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: I have watched as my clients benefitted from Art Therapy

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Jacquelyn M. Brown LPC Wisconsin

Title Retired, was an In-Home Therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Not currently affiliated

Address 1860 Hawthorne Avenue East

City and ZIP St Paul MN 55119-4527

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a licensed mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: One Adol + Geri, Crisis, SPMI

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: There is so much need for mental health supports, Adding a tool to the tool box will create more accessibility

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Lisa Carol Chigo LACC / IADC

Title Mental Health Crisis Clinician

Agency/Organization (If applicable) _____

Address 1102 Edgerton St.

City and ZIP St. Paul 55130

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a licensed mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: adults, adolescents, children, & families

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Shawna Marshall, MA, LPCC-S

Title Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor Supervisor

Agency/Organization (If applicable) _____

Address _____

City and ZIP Lawrence 56156

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a licensed mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: adults and individuals in crisis

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Hannah Daniels MA LPCC

Title Mental Health Therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) _____

Address 7371 Rosewood Lane

City and ZIP Maple Grove 55369

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a licensed mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: adolescents and adults,

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.

Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials D. Nathan Grundahl, DNP, APRN, PMN, PMHNP-BC

Title Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Prairie Care

Address 4510 W. 77th St, Edson, MN 56425

City and ZIP _____

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a licensed mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: Adolescents & Adult Outpatient/OP Mental Health

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.

Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Halley Raifsnider, MS, LPCC

Title Director of Dialectical Behavior Therapy

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Secure Base Counseling Center

Address 570 Professional Dr.

City and ZIP Northfield, MN 55057

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a licensed mental health professional in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: Adults with Autism

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.

Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Laura Russell-Reynolds, MA, LPCC

Title Clinical Supervisor

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Fraser

Address 9120 Springbrook Dr NW

City and ZIP Cook Rapids, MN 55433

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am an Art Therapist practicing in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations:
Complex Trauma and PTSD Survivors

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely, 
Name & Credentials Natalee Bigger Stockdale, MA, ATR-BC, LPCC, NCC
Role Art Therapist and Researcher
Agency/Organization (If applicable) Beautiful Changes LLC
Address 1794 McKusick Rd Ct N
City and ZIP Stillwater, MN 55082

CC:
Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: mental health clinic,
adolescents & adults

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Paige Groebner, MS, LPCC

Role therapist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Sagent Behavioral Health

Address 101 Dehler Dr.

City and ZIP Sartell MN 56377

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590
Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: Private practice, Neurodiversity, trauma, anxiety, children, adults, LGBTQ+

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials

Patricia Reigel, MA LMFT

Role Marriage + Family Therapists

Agency/Organization (If applicable)

Vagda Mental Health

Address 299 Coon Rapids Blvd NW Ste 100

City and ZIP Coon Rapids, MN 55433

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: MA, LMFT, BCN WORKING IN OUTPATIENT CLINIC WITH DEVELOPMENTAL TRAUMA

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials RACHAEL CAVEGN MA, LMFT BCN

Role MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

Agency/Organization (If applicable) MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING SERVICES

Address 615-1ST AV2. NE SUITE 310

City and ZIP 55413

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy - Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: outpatient clinic - pediatrics

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It increases opportunities for art therapists to work in schools, hospitals, and other spaces where mental health services are desperately needed
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely, Sarah Williams
Name & Credentials Sarah Williams, MA CCC-SLP
Role Pediatric Speech Language Pathologist
Agency/Organization (If applicable) _____
Address 10230 Union Terrace Ln N
City and ZIP Maple Grove 55369

CC: Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer
Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A
DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi
DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles
Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo



Bill #: HF 2590
House Health Finance & Policy Committee
Position: Favorable

From:
Tessa Gittleman, MA, LMFT-S
Owner/Operator
Tessa Gittleman, PLLC

9/18/2025

Dear Chairs Backer and Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of Bill #: HF 2590, which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota is at the forefront of the conversation.

As a licensed mental health provider, a supervisor, and a consumer of mental health services, I believe that consumers should be protected from people who are practicing art therapy without any oversight, regulation, or licensure. Art therapy is one of the most vulnerable forms of therapy one can do, often creating pieces in session that can be raw, sacred, and tangible externalizations of their innermost thoughts. I have supervised those on track for LPCC or LMFT licensure, identifying with art therapy as an orientation, but having no formal training or practice in it. They are not sure of their ethical obligations to protecting or sharing client creations, they are not informed about how to support clients through their creative process, and cause unintentional harm that the BBHT, BMFT, and BOSW are limited to address. Art therapy is an essential field that can be abused, dismissed, or under-appreciated for the weight that it has held, both historically and currently, as a resource in our community. They deserve to have their own dedicated board to help protect providers and the public from undue harm.

As a legislator, your districts have communities full of families, individuals, and constituents who have, or could, benefit from art therapy services during the ongoing US mental health epidemic. These constituents will range from veterans returning home after service, immigrants arriving in Minnesota, locals experiencing infrastructure failures, and children. They will come to art therapists because of community crises, global concerns, and personal issues. These are the people you have sworn to protect, and they often do not know that "art therapist" is an unprotected term, meaning any provider can claim status and cause undue harm. Please help us to take action to protect the public. Your prominent and impactful voice is crucial for art therapists to meaningfully, sustainably, and ethically support the public in addressing mental health.

Tessa Gittleman, MA, LMFT-S
info@tessagittleman.com
(p) 612-440-8377

Tessa Gittleman, PLLC
5851 Duluth Street, Unit 300
Golden Valley, MN 55422



In short, I support the much-needed state licensure of clinical art therapy, and I urge our state's representatives to pass this legislation in support of the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Tessa Gittleman, MA, LMFT-S

Tessa Gittleman, PLLC

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

My MN House Reps: Cedrick R. Frazier and Ilhan Omar

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

Tessa Gittleman, MA, LMFT-S
info@tessagittleman.com
(p) 612-440-8377

Tessa Gittleman, PLLC
5851 Duluth Street, Unit 300
Golden Valley, MN 55422

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a retired Art Therapist who practiced in Minnesota, working primarily with the following populations: [women and children domestic abuse, intellectually disabled, adults and adolescence](#)

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects consumers (clients/patients) and providers of art therapy by maintaining clear standards of practice for Clinical Art Therapists & other mental health professionals.
- It prevents potential harm by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: [allows for future acceptance on insurance panels and affordability.](#)

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

[Theresa Hوجلund Mueller MA, ATR-BC](#)
[11099 Alcott Drive](#)
[Sauk Centre MN 56378](#)

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo

HF 2590

Minnesota House: Health Finance & Policy Committee

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Jeff Backer and Chair Robert Bierman,

Please accept this letter in support of **HF 2590** which will license clinical art therapy in the state of Minnesota. I support the professional recognition of art therapy, and I urge the state to support the professional and ethical practice of art therapy during a time when mental health in Minnesota has significant needs. We need strong mental health advocates, increased awareness, and additional visibility now more than ever, which supporting this bill will provide.

I am a mental health / other health care professional in Minnesota, working in the following settings and with the following populations: Speech Language Pathologist
working in Pediatric Outpatient Setting, serving children ages 2-17

I believe Clinical Art Therapists need an independent state license because:

- It ensures equality and representation for Art Therapists in the mental health field.
- It protects community members seeking art therapy services by maintaining clear standards of practice between Clinical Art Therapy and other similar professions.
- It prevents potential harm to community members by ensuring non-trained professionals do not practice outside their education and qualifications.
- Other: _____

I urge you, our state's representatives, to continue your commitment to the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans, and to increase access to necessary and life-saving mental health care services, through the licensing of clinical art therapists and protecting the professional and ethical practice of art therapy.

Sincerely,

Name & Credentials Tressa Theis, MS, CCC-SLP

Role Speech Language Pathologist

Agency/Organization (If applicable) Children's Therapy Center - Kelly Services Inc.

Address _____

City and ZIP Apple Valley, MN

CC:

Vice Chair(s): Rep. Danny Nadeau and Rep. Liz Reyer

Ranking Minority Member(s): N/A

DHS - Main Commissioner: Shireen Gandhi

DHS - Assistant Commissioner for Behavioral Health: Teresa Steinmetz

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Chair: Landyn Prescott-Miles

Board of Behavioral Health & Therapy – Executive Director: Samantha Strehlo



Rep. Anquam Mahamoud
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55155

February 23, 2026

Dear Rep. Mahamoud:

The Coalition of Recovery Investment (CORI) is dedicated to reducing the harm caused by chemical dependency and improving the health of our families, communities, and state and that starts with fighting for timely access to substance use disorder (SUD) treatment options.

CORI supports HF3444 that would prohibit prior authorization (PA) and step therapy for medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) in Minnesota public programs. MOUD works. Prior authorization delays care and Minnesota should remove red tape so people can start treatment the day they're ready.

Research consistently demonstrates the effectiveness of early intervention and continuous care in treating SUD. This is a straightforward **“don't delay lifesaving treatment”** policy. Treatment delays can be deadly. Opioid use disorder is a condition where relapse risk is high and the window to engage someone in treatment can be short.

National data underscore the urgency:

- Only about **17–20% of people with opioid use disorder receive MOUD**, despite it being the gold standard of care.
- Public health and Medicaid policy analyses consistently describe PA as a barrier involving restrictive requirements and administrative friction; removing PA is associated with improved access and better continuity of care.

Minnesota has the opportunity to align policy with medical evidence and public health best practice.

This proposal does not expand coverage. It does not create new benefits. It simply removes unnecessary red tape so that when treatment is covered, it is accessible without delay.

CORI urges support for this lifesaving legislation. If you have any questions, reach out to CORI's consultant, Sarah Erickson, at sarah.erickson@unitedstrategiesllc.com.

Sincerely,
Bill Messinger
Chair, Coalition of Recovery Investment

Prohibit Prior Authorization for MOUD



- **Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) work.**
- **Prior authorization (PA) delays care.**
- **Minnesota should remove red tape so people can start treatment the day they're ready.**

What this legislation does....

- **This is a “don’t delay lifesaving treatment” policy.** It bars **prior authorization and step therapy** for any **FDA-approved class of drugs used to treat opioid use disorder (MOUD)**.
- **Practically:** it helps ensure people can **start and stay on buprenorphine products, methadone (as applicable through coverage rules), and extended-release naltrexone** without administrative delays when coverage would otherwise apply.

Why this matters...

- **Treatment delays can be deadly.** Opioid use disorder is a condition where relapse risk is high and the window to engage someone in treatment can be short.
- **Prior authorization is not a clinical tool.** It’s an administrative gate that can delay pharmacy pick-up, disrupt continuity, and add hurdles for providers already facing workforce constraints.
- **Evidence trend:** Public health and Medicaid policy analyses describe PA as a barrier that can include restrictive requirements and administrative friction; removing PA is associated with **improved access and better continuity**.
- **Access remains a problem nationally.** One multi-state public health analysis notes that only **17%** of people with OUD receive MOUD, and that insurance practices like PA can hinder access.

Minnesota should join 22 other states in supporting patients

- “At least **22 states** have already moved to limit or prohibit prior authorization for MOUD.
- Health policy officials including the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the American Society of Addiction Medicine have all advised removing prior authorization of MOUD.

Contact Sarah Erickson, CORI Lobbyist at sarah.erickson@unitedstrategiesllc.com or 651-303-0990



February 20, 2026

Rep. Robert Bierman
Capitol Room 120
75 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Rep. Jeff Backer
Capitol Room 120
75 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Co-chairs Bierman and Backer and Members of the House Health Finance and Policy Committee:

We write in support of Representative Mahamoud's bill that would prohibit the use of prior authorization and step therapy for drugs used in the treatment of opioid use disorder under Medical Assistance.

More than 650 Minnesotans die from opioid overdose per year. In the fight against these deaths, one of the most important ways to save lives is medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) including methadone or buprenorphine. Methadone and buprenorphine reduce death by 50% or more. Prior authorizations can result in treatment delays for those seeking help.

Nationally, there has been substantial interest in expanding access to substance use services, particularly those related to opioid use. A prohibition on these prior authorizations will help increase the accessibility of life-saving medications for patients in Minnesota.

We respectfully ask for your support of prohibiting prior authorization for drugs used in the treatment of opioid use disorder so Minnesotans can begin timely treatment when they're ready.

Sincerely,

Brian Grahan, MD
Division Director, Addiction Medicine
Hennepin Healthcare

Eric Hazen, MD
Medical Director, Jail Health Services
Hennepin Healthcare

Gavin Bart, MD PhD
Addiction Medicine Clinic
Hennepin Healthcare



Minnesota Association of Community Mental Health Programs

Representative Robert Bierman, Co-Chair
Representative Jeff Backer, Co-Chair
Health Finance & Policy Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives
February 23, 2026

Dear Co-Chairs Bierman, Backer and Committee Members

On behalf of the Minnesota Association of Community Mental Health Programs (MACMHP), I am sending this letter to support Representative Mahamoud's HF 3444 – removing prior authorization and step-therapy requirements from Medications for Opioid Use Disorder.

The Minnesota Association of Community Mental Health Programs (MACMHP) is the state's leading association for Community Mental Health Programs, representing 35 community-based mental health providers and agencies across the state. Our mission is to serve all who come to us seeking mental and chemical health services, regardless of their insurance status, ability to pay or where they live. As Essential Community Providers, we serve primarily culturally diverse, low-income, uninsured and public healthcare program insured Minnesotans, who cannot access services elsewhere. We serve our clients with comprehensive and coordinated care.

The majority of MACMHP member community mental health programs provide medication assisted therapies to treat opioid use disorder. We know the life-saving results timely access to appropriate medications have on individuals struggling with addiction and opioid use disorder. Conversely, we have seen the consequences of treatment delays, which can be deadly. Opioid use disorder is a condition where relapse risk is high and the window to engage someone in treatment can be short. Prior authorization is not a clinical tool. It's an administrative gate that can delay pharmacy pick-up, disrupt continuity, and add hurdles for providers already facing workforce constraints.

Public health and Medicaid policy analyses describe prior authorization as a barrier that can include restrictive requirements and administrative friction. Removing prior authorization is associated with improved access and better continuity. Access remains a problem nationally. One multi-state public health analysis notes that only 17% of people with OUD receive MOUD, and that insurance practices like prior authorization can hinder access.

Please support HF 3444 and removing this administrative barrier to critical treatments in addressing opioid use disorder in Minnesota.

Sincerely

Jin Lee Palen, Executive Director
Minnesota Association of Community Mental Health Programs | MACMHP



February 20, 2026

Co-Chairs Backer and Bierman
Members of the House Health Finance and Policy Committee

RE: HF 362 (Pinto) – Licensure for massage therapy

Dear Co-Chairs Backer and Bierman and members of the House Health Finance and Policy Committee,

On behalf of the League of Minnesota Cities' 843 members, thank you for the opportunity to provide our letter of support for HF 362. The League has had a long-standing policy position supporting statewide registration and licensing of massage therapists.

The League believes this legislation will help cities establish legitimacy of providers and businesses applying for local establishment licenses, assist local law enforcement and regulatory agencies with access to state-level therapist license data, and help to prevent individuals from conducting criminal activities such as prostitution and sex trafficking out of establishments operating as massage therapy facilities.

The League is grateful for the 2025 legislation expanding local governments' ability to conduct federal background checks on those seeking local licensure and looks forward to continuing to work with the bill authors and advocates on ensuring that a city's ability to investigate local business license applicants remains.

We are grateful for Rep. Pinto's leadership on this issue and thank you again for you and your committee's willingness to hear HF 362 and to make this issue a priority this session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pierre Willette', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Pierre Willette,
Senior Intergovernmental Relations Representative

Date: February 20, 2026
To: Health Finance and Policy Committee Members
From: Samantha Strehlo, Executive Director
Subject: HF 2590 Written Testimony

My name is Samantha Strehlo and I am the Executive Director of the Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy (BBHT). I appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony today.

HF2590 proposes licensure for clinical art therapists in Minnesota, with BBHT serving as the board that oversees implementation and regulation of the license. BBHT remains neutral on the bill and would implement and administer the new license effectively should HF 2590 become law.

On March 12, 2025, Senator Melissa Wiklund referred this legislative proposal to the Council of Health Boards (Council) for review. A copy of the Council's report has been provided to the Committee. I wanted to highlight three of the legislative considerations included in the report:

1. There are approximately 200 certified clinical art therapists in the State of Minnesota and almost all of them are already licensed by one of the 4 mental health boards (Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy, Board of Marriage and Family Therapy, Board of Social Work, and Board of Psychology). This provides a mechanism for the public (including clients/patients) to file a complaint regarding substandard care, including care related to art therapy. The Boards have authority to impose discipline as warranted.
2. Creation of a clinical art therapy license will not restrict the use of art therapy to only those licensed as clinical art therapists. Those licensed as mental health professionals with appropriate education, training, and competency will still be able to provide art therapy services in Minnesota.
3. Creation of the clinical art therapy license may lead other therapists practicing other mental health specialties (play therapy, equine therapy, dance therapy, recreational therapy, etc.) to seek regulation.

While the BBHT and Council recognize the valuable contributions of clinical art therapists, there has been no clear evidence demonstrating harm to the public due to the absence of licensure or the need for licensure to ensure competent art therapy practice.

February 23, 2026

RE: FQHC COMMENTS on HF2760- A2 AMENDMENT

Mister Co- Chairs and Members of the House Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Renee Leinbach. I am the Head of Advancement at Minnesota Community Care , a Federally Qualified Healthcare Clinic (FQHC) in St. Paul serving nearly 30,000 unique patients each year. We provide primary medical, dental, and behavioral health care to medically underserved people.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the A2 amendment to HF2760.

In the past, the State has appropriated a \$2.7M annual subsidy which was awarded to the 19 FQHCs in the state. This was divided amongst the 19 by providing a 2% base allocation to each (\$54K) which used 38% of the total subsidy amount. The remaining 62% of the total subsidy amount was allocated using, among other metrics, a formula that included the current number of patients served and the costs of the patients who used the clinic's sliding fee scale program. This allowed most of the subsidy (the 62%) to be "distribute(d) in proportion to each federally qualified health center's amount of discounts granted to patients...". In other words, the remaining amount to be distributed was to follow the lives of the people served.

During this last session, the total subsidy of \$2.7M was increased to \$13.2M, which helped each FQHC as they endure the financial strains all safety net clinical organizations are currently under. Additionally, the base allocation was increased to 5%. When all 19 FQHCs were awarded their 5% base, this used nearly the total State subsidy, leaving almost nothing remaining to divide amongst the clinics based on how many patients they saw. Regardless of how many patients were served by each FQHC--50,000 or 2,000--each clinic received about the same amount of funding.

This action resulted in the severe underfunding of nearly 1/4 of the FQHCs in Minnesota and, more importantly, this inequity underfunded approximately 60% of the people in Minnesota who seek care at an FQHC. The funding did not follow the lives. The base award went from \$54k last year to \$659K this year, a more than 10 times greater amount, disabling the ability to utilize the formula that the Minnesota Department of Health has designed to ensure that our funding follows lives.

The amendment to this statute recommends that we modify the base award to 3.5% instead of 5%, which would, indeed, create a small remaining balance that could then follow the lives of the people served. I would respectfully request that, instead of 3.5% we to return to the 2% the State has used previously. This would ensure each FQHC would still receive a meaningful award (2% of the current much larger pot is a significantly larger number than 2% of the previous smaller pot) and yet would still leave 62% of the entire subsidy to be fairly shared with all 19

FQHCs based on the number of patients they see and the cost of care for the patients on their sliding fee scale program.

We cannot continue to underfund our larger urban safety net clinic systems who serve the majority of the people in Minnesota who utilize an FQHC for their care. Thank you for prioritizing the right of all people to high quality healthcare with a meaningful and fair financial investment.

How Untrained Individuals Can Harm Clients in Massage Therapy

Massage therapy is a specialized field that requires extensive training in anatomy, physiology, pathology, and hands-on techniques. Without this expertise, an untrained individual attempting to perform a massage can inadvertently cause harm—ranging from physical injuries to emotional distress. Below, we explore the risks and potential consequences of receiving a massage from someone who lacks professional training.

1. Limited Knowledge of Anatomy and Physiology

A licensed massage therapist undergoes rigorous training to understand the human body's complex structure, including muscles, nerves, bones, and circulatory systems. This knowledge is critical for ensuring a safe and effective massage.

Risks of Inadequate Training:

- **Nerve Damage:** Applying pressure in the wrong areas can compress nerves, leading to numbness, tingling, or even long-term damage.
- **Internal Organ Injury:** Some massage techniques, if applied improperly, can exert excessive force on internal organs, particularly in sensitive areas like the abdomen.
- **Blood Clot Complications:** If a person has varicose veins or deep vein thrombosis (DVT), deep pressure in the wrong area could dislodge a clot, potentially triggering a life-threatening embolism.

2. Incorrect Pressure and Technique

Massage therapy is not a one-size-fits-all practice. The amount of pressure, speed, and type of movement must be adjusted based on the client's body type, health history, and specific needs. Untrained individuals often lack the ability to make these adjustments.

Potential Consequences:

- **Bruising and Tissue Damage:** Applying too much pressure can cause muscle strain, bruising, or inflammation.
- **Joint Injuries:** Improper stretching or forceful manipulation of joints can lead to sprains, dislocations, or ligament damage.
- **Delayed Healing:** Those recovering from injuries or surgery may experience setbacks if a massage is too aggressive or performed incorrectly.

Failure to Identify Health Conditions That Require Caution

Licensed therapists are trained to recognize conditions where massage should be avoided or modified. Without this knowledge, an untrained individual may unknowingly put a client's health at risk.

Health Risks Include:

- **Spreading Infections:** Massaging over an active skin infection or open wound can cause bacteria to spread.
- **Fragile Bones and Chronic Conditions:** People with osteoporosis or certain musculoskeletal conditions require specialized techniques—incorrect pressure can lead to fractures.
- **Circulatory Issues:** Clients with high blood pressure, varicose veins, or cardiovascular conditions may face serious health complications if inappropriate massage techniques are used.

Emotional and Psychological Risks

Massage is not just a physical experience—it’s also deeply personal. A trained therapist understands how to maintain professional boundaries and create a safe, comfortable environment.

How This Can Go Wrong:

- **Violating Personal Boundaries:** Without proper training in ethical touch, an untrained individual may unintentionally make a client feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
- **Trauma Sensitivity Issues:** Many people seek massage therapy to help with stress, anxiety, or past trauma. A lack of training in client communication and trauma-informed care can lead to unintended emotional distress.
- **Unintentional Misinterpretation:** Professional therapists are trained to ensure therapeutic touch remains appropriate. An untrained person might inadvertently create discomfort or engage in behavior that could be perceived as inappropriate.

Ethical and Legal Implications

Licensed massage therapists adhere to strict ethical and legal standards in states that have license requirements to protect both themselves and their clients. Without this framework, untrained individuals may unknowingly violate important professional guidelines.

Potential Issues:

- **Lack of Informed Consent:** A professional therapist ensures that the client fully understands what to expect from the session. An untrained person might fail to explain procedures or obtain proper consent.
- **Legal Liability:** If an untrained person causes harm, they could face lawsuits or legal repercussions.
- **Hygiene and Safety Concerns:** Professional therapists follow strict sanitation protocols to prevent infections. Someone without this training may neglect proper hygiene, increasing the risk of illness or contamination.

Risks of Misapplying Advanced Techniques

Certain massage techniques require additional certification and specialized knowledge. Using them incorrectly can lead to serious health complications.

There are over 100 different massage techniques and here is just a small sample of techniques that should only be performed by *trained professionals*:

- **Deep Tissue Massage:** Without proper understanding of muscle layers and warming-up techniques, deep tissue work can cause extreme soreness, pain, or injury.
- **Prenatal Massage:** Pregnancy massage requires specialized training—certain techniques can trigger contractions or put stress on the baby.
- **Lymphatic Drainage Massage:** This technique is designed to encourage fluid movement in the body. If done improperly, it can disrupt the body's natural drainage process and cause complications.

Failure to Adapt to Individual Client Needs

Every client is unique, requiring a tailored approach to massage therapy. A trained professional knows how to adjust techniques based on age, health, and lifestyle.

Risks for Different Populations:

- **Elderly Clients:** Older adults often have fragile skin, reduced circulation, or arthritis, requiring gentler techniques.
- **Athletes:** Sports massage is a specialized field—overworking the muscles without proper knowledge can lead to soreness or injury instead of relief.
- **Children:** Pediatric massage requires an understanding of child development and appropriate pressure levels to ensure safety.

Massage therapists work with a wide range of populations, each requiring specialized techniques and considerations. These include:

1. **General Population** – Individuals seeking relaxation, stress relief, or general wellness.
2. **Athletes** – Professionals and amateurs needing sports massage for performance enhancement, injury prevention, and recovery.
3. **Pregnant Individuals** – Expectant mothers who benefit from prenatal massage for pain relief, swelling reduction, and relaxation.
4. **Elderly Individuals** – Seniors who require gentle techniques to address age-related issues such as arthritis, poor circulation, and fragile skin.
5. **Infants and Children** – Pediatric massage helps with conditions like colic, developmental delays, and muscle tone issues.
6. **Individuals with Chronic Pain** – People with fibromyalgia, arthritis, migraines, or other chronic pain conditions who seek relief through therapeutic massage.
7. **Individuals with Disabilities** – Those with physical or neurological disabilities, such as cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, or spinal cord injuries, requiring specialized care.
8. **Cancer Patients** – Oncology massage is tailored to those undergoing cancer treatment to reduce pain, nausea, fatigue, and anxiety.

9. **Post-Surgical Patients** – Individuals recovering from surgery who need massage to promote healing, reduce scar tissue, and improve mobility.
10. **Individuals with Mental Health Conditions including our veterans** – People with anxiety, depression, PTSD, or high stress levels who benefit from massage's calming effects.
11. **Individuals with Cardiovascular Conditions** – Those with heart disease, high blood pressure, or circulatory issues, requiring modifications to ensure safety.
12. **People with Lymphatic Disorders** – Individuals with lymphedema or compromised immune systems who need specialized lymphatic drainage massage.
13. **Workers with Physically Demanding Jobs** – Laborers, office workers, and professionals experiencing muscle strain from repetitive motions or prolonged sitting.
14. **Individuals in Hospice or Palliative Care** – Those at the end of life receiving gentle, comforting touch for pain and stress relief.
15. **Trauma Survivors** – People with past physical or emotional trauma, requiring trauma-informed massage therapy to ensure comfort and safety.

Each group has unique needs, and professional massage therapists receive specialized training to provide safe and effective care for them.

Conclusion: The Importance of Professional Training

Massage therapy is far more than just applying pressure to sore muscles—it is a skilled practice that requires a deep understanding of anatomy, physiology, pathology, ethics, and technique. When an untrained individual attempts to perform a massage, they can unintentionally cause harm, whether through physical injury, emotional distress, or worsening a medical condition.

For these reasons, it's essential to seek out licensed massage therapists who have completed the necessary education, training, and certification. This ensures not only a safer experience but also a more effective and beneficial one for the client.



February 23, 2026

Dear Members of the Health Policy and Finance Committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Medical Association, I am writing in support of HF 3444 to prohibit prior authorization for medications used to treat opioid use disorder (OUD).

Prior authorization frequently interferes with timely access to essential care for patients. According to the American Medical Association, 94% of physicians report that prior authorization delay access to necessary care. 82% report that delays from prior authorization have led to patients abandoning recommended treatments. Nearly one in four physicians report that prior authorization has led to a serious adverse event for a patient, including hospitalization, permanent impairment, or even death.

Delays in care due to prior authorization for those with OUD can be especially dangerous. Medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) are clinically proven to reduce overdose deaths and improve recovery outcomes. These medications are the standard of care for OUD and are critical to addressing both the human and economic costs of the opioid epidemic. Delays in initiating or maintaining MOUD increase the risk of relapse, overdose, and death. Administrative barriers such as prior authorization interrupt care at precisely the moment when timely access is most critical.

HF 3444 would remove unnecessary and dangerous barriers to life-saving treatment for those with opioid use disorder. I urge your support for this bill.

Sincerely,

Lisa Mattson, MD
President, Minnesota Medical Association