

- SUBJECT:** Creating the Advisory Council on Music Therapy
- COMMITTEE:** Public Health — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 8 ayes — S. Thompson, Allison, Coleman, Guerra, Lucio III, Ortega, Price, Sheffield
- 2 nays — Frank, Zedler
- 1 absent — Wray
- WITNESSES:** For — Antonio Milland Santiago; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Aaron Gregg, Alzheimer's Association; Chris Masey, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities; Roberto Haddad, DHR Health; Bill Kelly, City of Houston Mayor's Office; Ryan Ambrose, MHHS; Eric Kunish, National Alliance on Mental Illness Austin; Alissa Sughrue, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Texas; Ann S. Graham and Gabriela Kane, Texans for the Arts; and six individuals)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Stephen Pahl, Department of State Health Services)
- DIGEST:** CSHB 787 would create an advisory council to study the need for the state certification of music therapists.
- Definitions.** Music therapy would be defined as the clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions, such as music improvisation, songwriting, singing, movement to music, and others by a music therapist to accomplish certain goals. The practice would not include the diagnosis or assessment of any physical, mental, or communication disorder.
- Music therapists would be defined as those who completed an approved music therapy program and held a certificate from the Certification Board for Music Therapists.

Duties. The advisory council would study the core competencies of a music therapist, including the skills and areas of knowledge that were essential to bring about expanded health and wellness in diverse communities and reduce health disparities.

Other core competencies the council could study would include:

- materials used to educate the public on certification of music therapists;
- the benefits of music therapy;
- the use of music therapy by individuals and in facilities or institutional settings;
- culturally competent communication and care;
- the use of music therapy for behavior change;
- the resources and support available from the American Music Therapy Association or its successor organization and the Certification Board for Music Therapists or its successor organization;
- the educational and clinical training requirements for a music therapist; and
- any continuing education requirements for a music therapist.

In conducting its study, the council would have to consult with the American Music Therapy Association, the Certification Board for Music Therapists, and other experts as needed.

Composition. The advisory council would consist of nine members appointed by the governor, including:

- two music therapists in Texas;
- one music therapist who represented an institution of higher education that had a music therapy program;
- one physician licensed in Texas who specialized in critical care;
- one social worker or professional counselor licensed in Texas;

- one special education administrator for a school district;
- one employer of music therapists;
- one client of a music therapist who had received music therapy services, or a representative of the client; and
- one speech-language pathologist, physical therapist, or occupational therapist licensed in Texas.

Members of the council would designate a member as the presiding officer, and no member could receive compensation for service on the council. HHSC would be required to provide administrative and staff support to the council.

Deadlines. The lieutenant governor and the House speaker would submit lists of qualified members of different racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds to the governor, and the governor would appoint the nine members within 90 days of the bill's effective date.

Within two years of its first meeting, the advisory council would submit and publish online a report to state leaders that included:

- a summary of best practices, curriculum, and training programs for music therapists and the need for quality and accredited training in providing music interventions related to health, recovery, and wellness;
- recommendations on the need and feasibility of state certification of music therapists, including the impact on consumers' access to music therapy services through certain state agencies;
- recommendations on procedures for the state certification of music therapists, including a system for renewing certifications and approving and accrediting curricula and training programs for music therapists; and
- recommendations for best practices for third-party reimbursement options and other methods through which secure funding for music therapists could be obtained.

The advisory council would be abolished on September 1, 2022

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

CSHB 787 would help increase knowledge and understanding of music therapy by creating a council of experts to study it and present findings to state stakeholders. The findings would ensure that lawmakers were well informed about music therapy before considering future legislation on the practice. It would increase the visibility of music therapy as an effective therapy for Alzheimer's, post traumatic stress disorder, developmental disabilities, and other health conditions. It would identify best practices so that more people, especially those from vulnerable populations, had an opportunity to seek such services from high-quality, certified practitioners in the future. The bill would minimize the impact on state resources by using a volunteer council.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

CSHB 787 would require an unnecessary study on the potential state certification of music therapists, which could divert resources from more important areas of focus.