

TEXAS ART THERAPY LICENSURE CAMPAIGN: WRITING LETTERS TO LAWMAKERS

It's critical that lawmakers hear from their constituents about passing the **Art Therapy Licensing and Practice Act** into law. To find out who your state representative is, visit <https://wrm.capitol.texas.gov/home>. Lawmakers only want to hear from their constituents from their district.

In your letter, you may want to include:

- You are an art therapist, and where you practice
- Example of client groups you work with
- Why you believe it's so important to expand access to mental health care in the community you work (for example, if you work with young people in schools, or at a hospital or treatment center)
- Stories of art therapists who leave the state due to lack of licensure
- **Bill name and number: SB1081 Art Therapy Licensing and Practice Act**

Art Therapist Sample Template:

Dear **[Senator name]**,

On behalf of **over 300 art therapists in Texas and the 13 million Texans living in mental health care professional shortage areas**, I am urging you to cosponsor the **Art Therapy Licensing and Practice Act (SB1081)**, which would establish a distinct art therapy license. Licensure protects the public from harm, misrepresentation, and fraud. With a license recognizing art therapy as a separate mental health and human services profession, members of the public would be better able to identify a properly trained art therapist. Your support of this bill would help expand access to mental health care by increasing the number of qualified mental health professionals and protect the public from harm caused by individuals falsely advertising themselves as art therapists.

As an art therapist based in **[your city]**, I work every day with people seeking support through crisis and trauma, including **[add some client groups you work with, such as children, veterans, older Americans, etc.]**. Art therapists are uniquely qualified to help address the myriad mental health issues that Texans are experiencing as they can integrate nonverbal cues and metaphors that are often expressed through the creative process. Credentialed art therapists like me have at least a master's degree and are trained in art and psychological theory.

According to KFF, **one in three adults (36%) in Texas report symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder**. Furthermore, 30% of Texans who need therapy are unable to obtain it. It's more important than ever to establish policies that would support our state's mental health and offer more mental health care options to meet the needs of people who are struggling.

Passing the Art Therapy Licensing and Practice Act will give Texans the assurance that their mental health provider can be trusted. It will also be a critical first step toward securing insurance reimbursement for art therapy services and retaining art therapy graduates who may prefer to work in one of the 13 states that provide licensure.

Texas was one of the first states to recognize the distinct professional training and practice of art therapy when the legislature passed a bill that created an art therapy specialization under the LPC license. However, this does not provide art therapists in Texas with a distinct license, forcing them to fit within counseling regulations that do not reflect their specialized training or scope of practice. **Without an independent license, it is extremely difficult to protect the title of "art therapist."** Additionally, there is no clear oversight by

qualified professionals, and barriers to insurance reimbursement—ultimately limiting public access to essential mental health services. Therefore, a distinct art therapy license as proposed by SB1081 would ensure that art therapists continue to practice in the state—and would pave the way for insurance reimbursement, making art therapy more accessible.

Thank you for your consideration, and for supporting the mental health and well-being of the people in Texas.

Sincerely,

[Your name]
[Your address]

Non-Art Therapist Sample Template:

In your letter, you may want to include:

- If you or a loved one have benefited from art therapy
- If you or a loved one have been harmed by someone falsely advertising as an art therapist
- **Bill name and number:** [SB1081](#) **An Act relating to the regulation of art therapy**

Dear [Representative/Senator name],

On behalf of **over 300 art therapists in Texas that serve people like [me/my spouse/my family member/etc.]** and the 13 million Texans living in **mental health care professional shortage areas**, I am urging you to cosponsor **SB1081 An Act relating to the regulation of art therapy**. Your support of this bill would help expand access to mental health care and protect the public from harm caused by individuals falsely advertising themselves as art therapists.

As a constituent based in [your city], I have seen firsthand the benefits of art therapy [add specific examples/stories]. Art therapists are uniquely qualified to help address the myriad mental health issues that Texans are experiencing as they can integrate nonverbal cues and metaphors that are often expressed through the creative process. Credentialed art therapists have at least a master's degree and are trained in art and psychological theory.

[I/my loved one] struggled with mental health, and [I/they] are not alone. According to KFF, **one in three adults (36%) in Texas report symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder**. Furthermore, 30% of Texans who need therapy are unable to obtain it. Art therapy offered [me/my loved one] [include benefits of art therapy/reasons it was preferred over traditional therapy for you or a loved one]. It's more important than ever to establish policies that would support our state's mental health and offer more mental health care options to meet the needs of people who are struggling. Traditional therapy may be daunting to many, and art therapy can offer an alternative that still allows individuals to seek the care they need.

Passing the Art Therapy Licensing and Practice Act will give Texans the assurance that their mental health provider can be trusted. It will also be a critical first step toward securing insurance reimbursement for art therapy services and retaining art therapy graduates who may prefer to work in one of the 13 states/jurisdictions that provide licensure. Increasing access through licensure will allow more Texans like [me/my spouse/my family member/etc.] to access the benefits of art therapy.

Thank you for your consideration, and for supporting the mental health and well-being of the people in Texas.

Sincerely,

[Your name]
[Your address]