

# 1889 INSTITUTE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **1889 INSTITUTE CALLS FOR END TO MUSIC THERAPY LICENSING**

*Only 8 states regulate therapists at all; only six license this occupation*

**OKLAHOMA CITY, OK** (February 26, 2019) – The 1889 Institute, an Oklahoma state policy think tank, has published “Music Therapist Licensure in Oklahoma.” It finds no public interest justification for the continued licensure of music therapists. Only 8 states even regulate music therapists, with two of these requiring only registration. Even the Music Therapy Committee within Oklahoma’s State Board of Medical Licensure and Supervision has stated that there are less restrictive, but effective, means of regulating music therapy.

“I suppose if there were evidence of widespread abuse of patients’ auditory nerves through excessively loud or tedious music, there might be a case for licensing music therapists,” said Benjamin M. Lepak, Legal Fellow for the 1889 Institute, and author of the report. “Risk for a patient in music therapy is already low, and there are means like the American Music Therapy Association’s private certification, to reduce even that risk without government intervention,” he said.

This latest short study, part of the 1889 Institute’s Licensing Directory for Oklahoma, explains that neither of two conditions that must simultaneously exist to justify occupational licensing are present for music therapists. These conditions are, first, that there must be real, significant risk for patrons, and, second, there must be little or no market and legal incentives for service providers to take proper precautions.

The 1889 Institute has repeatedly found that Oklahoma needlessly licenses occupations, including funeral directors and embalmers, electrologists (hair removal), cosmetology/barbering, pedorthists (foot orthotics), social workers, and locksmiths. This state is often one of only a handful licensing certain occupations, and often does so in particularly onerous ways.

The 1889 Institute has produced several longer publications regarding occupational licensing, including “The Need to Review and Reform Occupational Licensing in Oklahoma,” “Policy Maker’s Guide to Evaluating Proposed and Existing Occupational Licensing Laws,” and “A Win-Win for Consumers and Professionals Alike: An Alternative to Occupational Licensing.”

Thus far, Oklahoma legislators have as often responded with bills to license more occupations as to attempt, in any way, to eliminate this needlessly onerous form of regulation.

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### **About the 1889 Institute**

The 1889 Institute is an Oklahoma think tank committed to independent, principled state policy fostering limited and responsible government, free enterprise and a robust civil society. The publication, “Music Therapist Licensure in Oklahoma” and other reports on licensing can be found on the nonprofit’s website at <http://www.1889institute.org/licensing.html>.