

## Georgia's HR 1007 Makes Policy Strides for Arts and Mental Health

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On Jan 12 the Georgia House Assembly filed [House Resolution 1007](#) – a formal acknowledgement of the effectiveness of arts and health initiatives in improving mental health outcomes. **The resolution positions what many of us working at the intersection of arts and health have come to know through practice and research: arts engagement can act as a preventative and rehabilitative measure in improving mental health outcomes.** Even more striking, the resolution earned bipartisan support and now stands as the first statewide legislative measure in the US explicitly centered on leveraging the arts to address mental health.

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In our May 2025 review in the journal, [Frontiers in Public Health](#), my co-authors and I mapped current arts in mental health policies in the US and reflected on the need in the US for more coordinated policy leadership and subsequent infrastructure, spaces where arts-in-health isn't just a grant-funded side project, but part of the broader mental health system. Currently in the US, policy at the intersection of arts and mental health is nascent compared to countries like the United Kingdom. In the US, momentum has been largely driven by the arts sector, and there are now ripe opportunities for the health sector to co-champion policy advancement. Georgia's move may seem minor, but it signals an important shift in how policymakers are beginning to consider arts engagement as a legitimate public health strategy rather than an add-on. Establishing this foundation also opens the door to future policy advancements.

What I find especially compelling are the future policy implications that can be built on this foundation. The resolution in itself immediately establishes a legislative measure while also building the foundation for future funding and appropriations. Concurrently, it also further legitimizes arts in mental health for both health and policy stakeholders while also signaling a broader cultural shift in the US for mental health policy. By acknowledging these efforts at the state level, Georgia is setting a precedent that opens the door for more resourcing, more cross-sector partnerships, and, importantly, a precedent for other states. As highlighted in our review, current national bodies in this space are advocating for concepts like state and national reimbursement models and even state level arts and health plans.

For me, this moment highlights what my research on arts in mental health policy keeps pointing to: the arts offer a culturally resonant, strengths-based, low-risk, and often cost-effective approach to supporting mental health. With this recent resolution, Georgia is making tangible steps forward in arts and mental health policy and setting a precedent that can inform efforts in other states. It is an important early step, and I am hopeful as we move together toward what comes next.

*As an interdisciplinary researcher and artist, Alex Rodriguez, MPH, mobilizes evidence about the preventative and rehabilitative impacts of arts engagement for mental health into practices and policies that will create equitable infrastructure for communities to thrive. Rodriguez is a Public Health PhD candidate at the University of Florida and a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Research Scholar.*

