



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Acting Secretary

Maryland Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers & Speech-Language Pathologists
4201 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215
Phone: 410-764-4723

January 20, 2021

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
Chair, Health and Government Affairs Committee
House Office Building, Room 241
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Bill Number – HB 233 - Health Occupations – Maryland Music Therapists Act – Letter of Support with Amendments

Dear Chair Pendergrass:

The State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, and Speech-Language Pathologists (the “Board”) is submitting this letter of support with amendments for HB 233 - Health Occupations – Maryland Music Therapists Act.

It is important to note that at the writing of this letter, an amended version of HB 233 is not yet available to the Board or the sponsors from the Department of Legislative Services. Therefore, we can only make general references to the sections that the Board voted to amend, which have been provided to the bill sponsor.

This bill’s purpose serves to require an individual practicing music therapy to be licensed by the State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, and Speech-Language Pathologists. To that end, and with the music therapists’ acquisition of two Board seats, the Board will be renamed to the State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists. The Board will adopt regulations, a code of ethics, continuing education requirements, and fees for Maryland Music Therapists.

The Board supports HB 233 with the following Board-approved amendments:

First, regarding the requirement that a physician who is familiar with the practice of Music Therapists, be added to the composition of the Board.

The Board currently has two physician seats, both of whom specialize in otolaryngology and the Board does not believe a third physician is necessary, already having the expertise of these two physicians a part of the current Board composition.

Second, the section that proposes the Board should be tasked with facilitation of the development of materials to educate the public concerning Music Therapists.

The Board believes that this is not an appropriate function of the Board, and rather a function of the professional association that Music Therapists would need to be certified with in order to be licensed to practice in the state of Maryland.

Third, the section that proposes the Board may not adopt regulations, codes of ethics, and continuing education requirements that alter the practice of music therapy or licensure requirements defined in this act.

The Board believes that by virtue of music therapists having two seats on the composition of the Board, this would allow them voting rights and thus, this is an unnecessary restriction on the Board.

The Board respectfully requests a favorable report on HB 233 with the requested amendments.

Thank you for your consideration of the Board's position. If you have any additional questions, please contact the Board's Executive Director, Dr. Candace G. Robinson, Au.D., at Candace.Robinson@maryland.gov or 443-915-7981.

Sincerely,



Candace G. Robinson, Au.D.
Board Executive Director

The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration