

10 - HB 155 - HGO - Audiology Board - LOS.docx.pdf

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Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists & Music Therapists

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2022 SESSION POSITION PAPER

BILL NO: HB 155
COMMITTEE: Health and Government Operations
POSITION: Support

TITLE: State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists - Revisions

BILL ANALYSIS: The purpose of House Bill (HB) 155 is to clarify quorum requirements, reciprocity guidelines and licensing requirements for Music Therapists and Audiology Assistants, as these professions have been recently added to the statute for the State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists (the “Board”). The Board will also be adopting regulations to establish guidelines for Music Therapists and Audiology Assistants.

POSITION AND RATIONALE: The Board strongly supports HB 155. With the addition of Music Therapists and Audiology Assistants, amendments must be made to the Board’s statute to include Audiology Assistants and Music Therapists to sections excluded in HB 161/SB 379 and HB 233/SB 82, Acts of 2021.

The bill also specifies the quorum requirements of the Board to include at least one Audiologist, Hearing Aid Dispenser, Speech-Language Pathologist, and Music Therapist. Audiology Assistants and Speech-Language Pathology Assistants are supervised by Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists and therefore a seat is not required for their profession at this time.

In amending Health Occupations Article, §2-301, the Board is clarifying the reciprocity guidelines for licensure, in which Maryland would honor the licensure of another state pending certain conditions. In this situation, applicants may be granted preliminary approval by Board staff to practice after their application has completed final review and is pending before the full Board. By granting preliminary approval to these applicants’, qualified clinicians will be able to begin providing services to consumers awaiting assistance more expeditiously.

Thank you for considering this testimony. The Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists is respectfully requesting a favorable report on HB 155. For more information, please contact the Board’s Executive Director, Ms. Oluremi Dean, MHA at Oluremi.Dean@maryland.gov or 443-844-7172.

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