

February 27, 2024

Chair Pamela Beidle
Finance Committee
3 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SB 795** Health Occupations - Practice Audiology - Definition
Position: **SUPPORT**

Madam Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Committee Members,

As a constituent, I ask you to support SB 795, which would give Doctors of Audiology in the state of Maryland full access to treat my hearing and balance needs. This would make healthcare more accessible, especially as I get older. Also, healthcare is becoming more expensive. Being able to have a doctor evaluate, diagnose, manage, and treat my hearing loss and dizziness disorders quickly and less costly means a great deal to me.

Earlier this year I had COVID. While I did not have a severe case I noticed that approximately 12 days in I had sudden hearing loss in my right ear. My audiologist did an exam and identified hearing loss and swelling. I was in need of steroids immediately to address the issue as there is a small window of time to reduce the swelling before it caused permanent hearing loss. Though my audiologist could diagnose me and knew the treatment she was unable to prescribe the medication. In turn I needed to seek emergency care with the general practitioner in order for her to review the results from the audiologist and then prescribe the medication.

I appreciate your help and ask that you please support HB 795. Having my doctors and healthcare providers be more affordable, having quick appointment times, and full access to further healthcare would make my life easier and delay complications that might arise.

Thank you for your support of SB 795 legislation.

Cindy McCarthy

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I recently found out that I had hearing loss in one ear. I visited Dr. Melissa Segev for ringing and dizziness, but because she was unable to order additional testing or prescribe steroids, I lost valuable time in my treatment. Because of the additional time that it took to schedule a separate visit with an ENT, who then prescribed steroids, my hearing loss was deemed permanent. Getting treatment quickly is critical to positive patient outcomes. Had Dr. Segev been able to immediately treat me, I may have had a different outcome. Allowing audiologists to deliver the full range of evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment will provide better patient outcomes.

I appreciate your help and ask that you please support HB 795. Having my doctors and healthcare providers be more affordable, having quick appointment times, and full access to further healthcare would make my life easier and delay complications that might arise.

Thank you for your support of SB 795 legislation.

Sincerely,

Katie Schieltz

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Audiology Associates

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I am a Patient Care Coordinator for an Audiologist and this bill would allow me to get any pertinent information on our patients and treat them here accordingly without referring to another doctor for numerous testing etc. This is that time consuming for our patients and the patients often are delayed by days even weeks in dealing with several offices for their hearing healthcare. I had a patient that had to go to the ENT and she waited several weeks as there were no appointments available sooner with an ENT that took her insurance and this was only to order imaging. This could have been avoided if all her care could have been done immediately here.

I appreciate your help and ask that you please support HB 795. Having my doctors and healthcare providers be more affordable, having quick appointment times, and full access to further healthcare would make my life easier and delay complications that might arise.

Thank you for your support of SB 795 legislation.

Sincerely,

Angela Strouse