



March 13th, 2024

Bill: HB 1476 – State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists – Appointment of Members

Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members:

The Maryland Speech-Language-Hearing Association (MSHA) has represented nearly 4,000 licensed professionals with advanced degrees in speech-language and audiology since 1964. We write to offer proposed amendments to HB 1476, which would require the Governor to appoint licensed audiologists to the State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists from a list submitted by the Maryland Academy of Audiology (MAA) rather than by the Board itself.

We are concerned that the bill as written would allow only the Maryland Academy of Audiology to submit names for appointment of audiologists to the Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists and Music Therapists. As the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)-affiliated state association, MSHA represents the professions of audiology and speech-language pathology, including over 350 ASHA certified audiologists who work in the state. Both MSHA and MAA are deeply invested in the practice of audiology in Maryland. We ask **that MSHA be given an equal opportunity to submit names for appointment of audiologists to the Board** and suggest the following language with proposed additions underlined and deletions in red:

(5) (i) Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, the Governor shall appoint the audiologist members, with the advice of the Secretary, from ~~a list~~s submitted to the Secretary and the Governor by the [Board] MARYLAND ACADEMY OF

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AUDIOLOGY AND THE MARYLAND SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING ASSOCIATION.

We also request an amendment to the bill that would allow MSHA, as the only organization that represents SLPs in the state, to submit the same to the Governor:

(i) Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, the Governor shall appoint the speech-language pathologist members, with the advice of the Secretary, from a list submitted to the Secretary and the Governor by the Maryland Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

(ii) The number of names on the list shall be at least 3 times the number of vacancies.

(iii) For each speech-language pathology vacancy, the Board shall notify all licensed speech-language pathologists in the State of the vacancy to solicit nominations to fill the vacancy.

Thank you for considering MSHA's proposed amendments to HB 1476.

Sincerely,



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