



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing
Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists
& Music Therapists
4201 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21215

**2024 SESSION
POSITION PAPER**

BILL NO: HB 1476
COMMITTEE: HGO
POSITION: Oppose

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

BILL ANALYSIS: This proposed bill will require the Governor to appoint the licensed audiologist members to the State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists (the “Board”) from a list submitted by the Maryland Academy of Audiology rather than the Board.

POSITION AND RATIONALE: The Board opposes HB 1476.

In 2021, the Board put forth SB 523/HB 600 to remove the Maryland Academy of Audiology from statute with the authority to appoint audiologist members to the Board. This bill passed (see chapters 711 and 712). The Board strongly disagrees that this language should be reinstated.

The Maryland Academy of Audiology (“MAA”) is a volunteer private membership organization. The Bill in its current form places no restrictions on MAA’s ability to screen out non-members from a prospective candidate pool or outright refuse to include otherwise qualified candidates from a candidate pool on the basis that a candidate is not a MAA member.

The Bill also does not achieve any consistency across the disciplines under the Board’s jurisdiction with respect to how candidate pools are created. At present, the Board compiles and submits candidate lists for Speech-Language Pathologist and Audiologist vacancies. Professional membership associations compile and submit candidate lists for Music Therapists, Hearing Aid Dispensers and non-voting physician members.

The State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists and Music Therapists, strongly urges an unfavorable report on HB 1476.

Thank you for your consideration. If you should require anything further, please contact Keena Stephenson, Executive Director, at keena.stephenson1@maryland.gov, or 443.832.0597.

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