

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 504

(Delegate Martinez, *et al.*)

Health

State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists – Physician Members – Repeal

This bill removes the two physician members of the State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists. The terms of the two physician members currently serving on the board must terminate on June 30, 2026. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2026.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not materially affect board revenues or expenditures, as discussed below.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Generally, an individual must be licensed by the State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists to provide hearing aid services, practice audiology, practice speech-language pathology, or practice music therapy in Maryland.

The board comprises 15 members: (1) three licensed audiologists; (2) three licensed speech-language pathologists; (3) two physicians; (4) two consumer members; (5) three licensed hearing aid dispensers; and (6) two music therapists. The physician members must be voting members of the board, except on proposals that expand or restrict

the practice of audiology or speech-language pathology. A physician member must be licensed in Maryland, hold a certificate of qualification from the American Board of Otolaryngology, and currently practice in the State. The physician members are appointed by the Governor, with the advice of the Secretary of Health, from a list of at least three names submitted by the Maryland Society of Otolaryngology.

In accordance with the budget of the board, each board member is entitled to compensation and reimbursement for expenses at a rate determined by the board.

State Expenditures: The board's current per diem is \$75, and the board meets 10 times each year. Therefore, the board *could* be expending up to \$1,500 annually on per diem for the two physician members. However, the board advises that the physician members have not recently requested per diem reimbursement. Therefore, the bill has no material impact on board revenues or expenditures.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Health; Department of Legislative Services

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caw/jc

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