



Allegany Hearing & Balance, LLC

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February 28, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Jana Brown and I am the owner of Allegany Hearing & Balance, LLC. I am a Doctor of Audiology and have two office locations; one in Allegany County and one in Garrett County in Western Maryland.

We are proud to provide all areas of hearing and vestibular care and have state of the art diagnostic equipment found only in larger metropolitan areas. This is important as residents of Allegany and Garrett County typically have to travel to either Baltimore or Morgantown, WV, to obtain state of the art health care. This is a burden due to the lower income levels found in our counties.

The state tax that is now added to all hearing related equipment and supplies adds to this burden of increased costs to our patients. Our Oakland office is only about six miles from West Virginia, so some of those patients are choosing to leave the state to obtain hearing health care because of the taxes that are now being added to their hearing care purchases.

We work with all ages of patients and are one of the very, very few in the state that accept Maryland Medicaid insurance. Those that are enrolled in Maryland Medicaid cannot afford to travel or pay increased taxes on their purchases. Hearing devices and supplies are for hearing impaired people. Research has shown that hearing impairment results in lower incomes and lower educational levels than almost all other disabilities. Removing this tax will also help me, as a small business owner in this state, to continue to grow and provide excellent employment opportunities for our local communities, (I have doubled the number of employees over the past 10 years) and enable me to continue to provide state of the art care for all of my patients.

I and my staff, and my patients, are requesting that the taxes now being charged on hearing care supplies and equipment be removed to reduce the burden of increased costs to hearing impaired individuals in Maryland.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jana Brown', written over a horizontal line.

Jana Brown, AuD

Board Certified in Audiology