



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Acting Secretary

Maryland Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers & Speech-Language Pathologists
4201 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215
Phone: 410-764-4723

February 24, 2021

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
Chair, Health and Government Affairs Committee
House Office Building, Room 241
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB 600 – State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers and Speech-Language Pathologists – Duties, Appointment of Members, and Requirement for Licensees – Letter of Support with Amendments

Dear Chair Pendergrass:

The State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, and Speech-Language Pathologists (the “Board”) is submitting this letter of support with amendments for HB 600 - State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers and Speech-Language Pathologists – Duties, Appointment of Members, and Requirement for Licensees. This bill’s purpose serves to amend Health Occupations Article § 1-801 to include the State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, and Speech-Language Pathologists as one of the included health occupations. It also serves to provide transparency and consistency amongst licensees to practice under said profession under the same name as indicated on their license; to provide a license number on any written documentation; to change the onus of soliciting for Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Board member appointments from local professional organizations to the Board itself; to change the onus of soliciting for the consumer of Board occupations services seat for a Board appointment from The Department of Disabilities, to any organization representing patients or family members of patients served by individuals licensed by the Board; to allow the Board and the Secretary to solicit for the consumer Board member appointment from the general public; to clarify statute language regarding requirements for licensure and the discretion of the Board to waive any of the qualifications required for a license to practice Audiology, Hearing Aid Dispensing, Speech-Language Pathology, or assisting in Speech-Language Pathology; and other clarifying changes.

Since the time of bill submission, the Board has learned of the potential magnitude of the fiscal impact of conducting a balloting process. The Board does not wish to incur these costs and would prefer to make the recommendation for Board seat appointments based upon the diversity of the applicants to include but not limited to: geography, race, ethnicity and sub-specialty within the profession.

The Board supports HB 600 with the following Board-approved amendments:

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, strike beginning with “and” in line 13 down through “vacancies” in line 14; in line 16, strike “and” and substitute “; repealing a certain provision of law requiring certain organizations to”; strike beginning with “repealing” in line 26 down through “place;” in line 28; and in line 29, strike “and make the list available on its website”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 5, strike beginning with the colon in line 8 down through “**NOTIFY**” in line 9 and substitute “**NOTIFY**”; strike beginning with “; **AND**” in line 11 down through “**GOVERNOR**” in line 15; strike beginning with the colon in line 23 down through “Notify” in line 24 and substitute “**NOTIFY**”; and strike beginning with “; and” in line 25 down through “**GOVERNOR**” in line 28.

On page 8, in lines 29 and 30, in each instance, strike the bracket.

On page 9, in lines 1, 6, and 8, strike “(A)”, “(b)”, and “(c)”, respectively, and substitute “(B)”, “(C)”, and “(D)”, respectively; strike line 3 in its entirety; and in line 4, strike “(3)” and substitute “(2)”.

The Board respectfully requests a favorable report on HB 600 with the requested amendments.

Thank you for your consideration of the Board’s position. If you have any additional questions, please contact the Board’s Executive Director, Dr. Candace G. Robinson, Au.D., at Candace.Robinson@maryland.gov or 443-915-7981.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Candace G. Robinson, Au.D.", written in a cursive style.

Candace G. Robinson, Au.D.
Board Executive Director

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