



Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists & Music Therapists

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

*Carolyn Stine, Chair – Oluremi Dean, Executive Director
4201 Patterson Avenue, Baltimore MD 21215 Phone: 410-764-4725*

February 9, 2022

The Honorable Delores G. Kelley
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

**RE: SB 407 – Health Occupations – Health Care Staffing Shortage Emergency –
Declaration and Licensing and Practice Requirements (Health Care Heroes Act of 2022) –
Letter of Information**

Dear Chair Kelley and Committee Members:

The Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists & Music Therapists (the Board) is submitting this letter of information for Senate Bill (SB) 407 – Health Occupations - Health Care Staffing Shortage Emergency - Declaration and Licensing and Practice Requirements (Health Care Heroes Act of 2022).

The Board is committed to providing quality care to our consumers by providing oversight to our licensees. As a result, applications for licensure undergo a thorough review process to verify their credentials to ensure public safety. Typically, completed applications are approved within 3 to 5 business days for full licensure. However, incomplete applications may face delays due to the turnaround time of completed background check reports provided by the Criminal Justice Information System and licensure verifications for those licensed in another state.

SB 407 would require the Board to issue temporary licenses during a health care staffing shortage emergency. However, with a turnaround time of no more than 5 business days, it is unclear if a temporary license would expedite the approval process. It is also unclear what would constitute as a Health Care Staffing Shortage Emergency for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists or Music Therapists since none are considered to be critical occupations.

The Board is in support of expediting the licensure process for critical occupations experiencing a staffing shortage emergency. Specifying the occupations experiencing the health care shortage would help prevent confusion among licensees. It will also ensure that qualified clinicians are providing services to consumers. Therefore, the Board respectfully asks that you consider this information while discussing SB 407.

If you would like to discuss this further, please contact the Board's Executive Director, Ms. Oluremi Dean, MS at Oluremi.Dean@maryland.gov or 443-844-7172.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Oluremi Dean". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Oluremi Dean, MS
Executive Director
State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers,
Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists

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