

## HB0830: State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists - Physician Members - Repeal

Sponsor: Delegate Robbyn Lewis

Chair Shane E. Pendergrass  
House Health & Government Operations Committee  
House Office Building, Room 241  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: **HB 830** State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists- Physician Members- Repeal  
Position: **SUPPORT**  
Briana Bruno Holtan, Au.D. Testimony

February 24, 2022

Madam Chair Pendergrass, Vice Chair Pena-Melnyk, and Committee Members:

My name is Briana Holtan and I am a practicing audiologist and small business owner of one of the largest and oldest private practices in the State of Maryland. On behalf of the Maryland Academy of Audiology, we are pleased to be working with Delegate Robbyn Lewis to update the Maryland Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists (Board of Examiners) membership.

The attendance of the ear, nose, and throat (ENT) physicians to Board of Examiners meeting is horrendous for a professional Board. In the 2003 bill file, the Board of Examiners submitted the attendance record between 1998-2002 of the ENT physicians. It was 52% back then and the attendance since then has not been much better than that! (See attached sheet from DHMH Board of Examiners, 2003.) In fact, three emergency hearings were held during the 2021 Maryland legislative session and the physicians only attended 50% of them and missed one critical emergency hearing completely! The Covid-19 pandemic is not an excuse as the meetings were all held virtually.

Additionally, the two surgeon Board members are not making good use of the State of Maryland's resources. The physicians should be able to justify why they should be entitled to receive state resources of per diem and travel expenses when no other Board has physician configuration. These state resources could be better used in professional training, other initiatives, or even assisting in subsidizing the cost of hearing aids to Maryland citizens.

Thank you for your time consideration and to Delegate Lewis for sponsoring this legislation. I ask for a favorable committee report on HB0830.



STATE OF MARYLAND

**DHMH**

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
4201 Patterson Avenue • Baltimore, Maryland 21215

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., Governor Arlene H. Stephenson, Acting Secretary

Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers and  
Speech-Language Pathologists

Board of Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers and  
Speech-Language Pathologists

Physician Attendance at Board Meetings

Calendar Year

Jan. – Dec. 2002	Dr. Niparko	Attended 4 of 7 meetings (new member, Dr. Staecker appointed 9/02)
	Dr. Staecker	Appointed 9/02 – not able to start until Jan. 2003 – missed Jan. meeting due to late starting surgery
	Dr. Yoeder	Attended 2 of 3 meetings Appointed 9/02 (to replace Dr. Epstein)
Jan. – Dec. 2001	Dr. Niparko	Attended 2 of 10 meetings (exemption requested)
	Dr. Epstein	Attended 1 of 3 meetings Resigned April, 2001
Jan. – Dec. 2000	Dr. Niparko	Attended 4 of 8 meetings
	Dr. Epstein	Attended 5 of 8 meetings
Jan. – Dec. 1999	Dr. Niparko	Attended 6 of 9 meetings
	Dr. Epstein	Attended 3 of 9 meetings (exemption requested)
Jan. – Dec. 1998	Dr. Niparko	Attended 6 of 8 meetings
	Dr. Epstein	Attended 5 of 8 meetings

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