



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

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2022 SESSION POSITION PAPER

BILL NO: HB 830
COMMITTEE: House Health and Government Operations
POSITION: Oppose

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

BILL ANALYSIS: HB 830 will modify the Board member composition for the State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists (the Board). The Board's two physician members will be removed.

POSITION AND RATIONALE: The Board currently consists of 15 Board members, two of which are licensed and practicing Otolaryngologists (ENT's). The physician members are voting members except on proposals that expand or restrict the practice of Audiologists, Speech-Language Pathologists or Music Therapists as stated in Health Occupation Article §2-202. Having physicians as members provides the Board with an important point of view from a medical perspective and invaluable insight on daily practices, education and legislation which is in the best interest of the public. The clinicians represented by the Board share patients with Otolaryngologists and often refer patients for medical evaluations. Likewise, patients are regularly referred by physicians for audiologic and speech and language evaluation and treatments. Therefore, having physicians represented as Board members, ensures and reinforces the multidisciplinary nature of our fields, as well as maintains a close relationship at all levels. The mission of the Board is to protect the safety of our patients.

The Board is not aware of any negative incidents or occurrences that derived from having physicians as members of our Board. In fact, the physicians enhance the Board and its representation of diverse fields of practice. For these reasons, the Board respectfully urges an unfavorable report on HB 830.

Thank you for considering this testimony. For more information, please contact the Board's Executive Director, Ms. Oluremi Dean, MHA at Oluremi.Dean@maryland.gov or at 443-844-7172.