



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Delegate Testimony in Support of HB 830

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

Dear Chair Pendergrass, Vice Chair Peña-Melnyk, and esteemed colleagues of the Health and Government Operations Committee:

HB 830 proposes to change membership of the State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Speech-Language Pathologists and Music Therapists, hereinafter referred to as the "Board".

The practice of changing membership of clinical oversight boards is not uncommon. Many members of this committee will recall voting to add Music Therapists to the membership of this Board, back in 2021.

The change proposed by this bill would reduce the size of the Board. Under current statute the Board is composed of 15 members, two of whom shall be licensed physicians holding certification from the American Board of Otolaryngology.

HB 830 proposes to remove the two physicians from the Board, and in so doing align it with 23 other state clinical oversight boards that do not have any physician/surgeon representation.

This proposed legislation is supported by the Maryland Academy of Audiology; Maryland Speech-Language-Hearing Association; practicing audiologists and speech-language pathologists in Maryland; as well as by other state audiology associations that do not have physician representation on their licensing boards.

However, it is essential to note that there is opposition to HB 830, which I became aware of only after introducing it. Once I became aware of opposition, I sought more information and reached out to all stakeholders. Over the past few weeks, I have spoken with all parties and convened meetings in order to better understand all of the points of view. As of this writing, I continue to lead good faith efforts to seek understanding and build consensus.

I respectfully request a favorable report.