



Maryland Academy of Audiology

P.O. Box 710

Parkville, MD 21234

<https://maaudiology.org/>

February 28, 2023

The Honorable Melony G. Griffith, Chair  
Senate Finance Committee  
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB 449 Practice Audiology – Definition

Position: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

Briana Bruno Holtan, Au.D. Testimony

Madam Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Committee Members,

My name is Briana Holtan, and I am a licensed practicing audiologist and business partner 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 Senators Gile, Beidle, Ellis, Hershey, Kramer, Mautz, and Ready to codify the recent Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Final Rule<sup>1</sup> language on Over The Counter (OTC) hearing aids by updating the Maryland Practice of Audiology Definition.

The Food and Drug Administration is responsible for protecting the public health by assuring the safety, efficacy, and security of human and veterinary drugs, biological products, medical devices, the nation's food supply, cosmetics, and products that emit radiation.<sup>2</sup> They are often referred to as one of *the* most careful, deliberate, and conservative government agencies.

As a daily provider of audiologic care, one of my duties is to verify benefits from third-party insurance payers (e.g., BlueCross/BlueShield, United Healthcare, Aetna, Cigna). The 2023 hearing aid benefits from payers already incorporate the FDA's Final Rule and use the terminology of "prescription" hearing aids. SB 449 legislation would ensure the audiology practice language is consistent with governmental agencies and third-party insurance payers' systems and will therefore allow patients to use their benefits and have coverage for the newly

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2022-08-17/pdf/2022-17230.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.usa.gov/federal-agencies/food-and-drug-administration>



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defined 'prescriptive' hearing aid devices when ordered and prescribed by a licensed audiologist in Maryland.

Thank you for your time and consideration Madame Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Sponsor Senator Gile and all co-sponsors. I ask for a favorable committee report on SB 449 to help your constituents.

Briana Bruno Holtan, Au.D.

Doctor of Audiology

Audiology Associates, Inc.