



938 National Hwy LaVale, MD 21502
301-729-1635 chelsea@ahbhearing.com

Late Testimony

February 5, 2023

Chair Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk
House Health & Government Operation Committee
Taylor House Office Bldg., Room 241
6 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB401 Practice Audiology –Definition
Position: SUPPORT

Madam Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Ariana Kelly, and Committee Members:

Recently, the FDA passed a ruling allowing for the sale of Over the Counter (OTC) hearing aids. This ruling was made to ensure that hearing aids could be more accessible and affordable for the population that requires this technology.

Previously, hearing aids that have been dispensed from a hearing care provider have been labeled as “restricted.” In this FDA ruling, these same hearing aids have been reclassified as “prescription” hearing aids. The technology, fit, and dispensing of these hearing aids have not changed. The only change has been the labeling and classification done by the FDA.

As audiologists, our desire is to assist our patients in their hearing health journey with the same level of care that we have been providing for years. Without the passing of HB401, audiologists may not be able to provide this same service that we have previously provided. I have been offering hearing health care to my patients for over three years. I have seen the changes in my patients’ lives after fitting these same hearing aids that are now being labeled as “prescription.”

If this bill is not passed, those seeking assistance with their hearing health will have yet another barrier to overcome in their hearing health journey. Having to go to a physician prior to obtaining hearing aids for a “prescription” will result in significantly fewer hearing-impaired individuals obtaining the assistance they may need.

After the FDA created the label of “prescription” hearing aids, they stated they did not intend for this label to create an extra barrier for audiologists fitting hearing aids or patients’ access to them. Please pass this legislation to ensure that Maryland law is consistent with federal law and the intent of the FDA’s ruling to make hearing aids more affordable and accessible.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Chelsea Lambie, AuD, FAAA'.

Chelsea Lambie, AuD, FAAA
Board Certified Audiologist