



Maryland Academy of Audiology
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February 8, 2023

The Honorable Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Chair
House Health & Government Operations Committee
Taylor House Office Building, Room 241
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 410 Practice Audiology – Definition - Position: **SUPPORT**

Briana Bruno Holtan, Au.D. Testimony

Madam Chair Peña-Melnyk, Vice Chair Ariana Kelly, 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 Delegate Ariana Kelly to codify the recent Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Final Rule¹ 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.² 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 payers (e.g., BlueCross/BlueShield, United Healthcare, Aetna, Cigna). The 2023 benefits already incorporate the FDA's Final Rule and use the terminology of "prescription" hearing aids. HB 401 legislation would ensure the audiology practice language is consistent with governmental agencies and third-party payers' systems and will therefore allow patients to use their benefits and have coverage for the newly defined 'prescriptive' hearing aid devices.

Thank you for your time consideration and to Delegate Kelly for sponsoring this legislation. I ask for a favorable committee report on HB 401.

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

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