

February 27, 2024

Chair Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk  
Room 241  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: **HB 464** Health Occupations - Practice Audiology - Definition  
Position: **SUPPORT**

Madam Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison, and Committee Members,

I am a licensed nurse practitioner at Johns Hopkins Hospital as an acute care clinician located in Baltimore, Maryland. My daily patient population includes patients 15-95 who I see for their complex acute care healthcare needs. I am writing in support of HB 464 which would modernize the definition of audiology.

Audiologists play a vital role in my ability to provide comprehensive patient healthcare. Licensed audiologists in Maryland are required to earn a clinical doctorate degree (Au.D.) and have significant didactic and clinical training in the specialty of audiology and vestibular healthcare. Their degree and level of education are the same as other non-physician, clinical doctors who I also refer my patients to, including optometry and podiatry. I rely on Audiologists to evaluate, diagnose, manage, and treat my patients' hearing and balance disorders.

A significant patient population that I care for head and neck patients with significant complex needs. Audiologists are central to the complex care needs for their expertise.

This valuable piece of legislation would modernize audiologic healthcare in Maryland. When passed, my patients will benefit with better access and affordability for their hearing and vestibular healthcare, and also assist me in serving patients who I can best serve. Thank you for your support of HB 464 legislation.

Sincerely,

Jessica Peters, DNP,MSN, RN, ACNP-BC, CNE

Assistant Professor, Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing

Acute Care Nurse Practitioner, Johns Hopkins Hospital