

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 dentist at Seneca Smiles, a general dental practice in the D.C./Maryland/Virginia metropolitan area. My daily patient population includes adults in their 90s to kids as young as one year old who I see for their dental 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 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.

Dental colleagues as well as my patients with hearing loss often times struggle to find access to care because of the sheer ambiguity between them and their otology or ENT counterparts.

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,

Dr. Pedro Lam

Pedro Lam, DDS

Owner of Seneca Smiles