



STATE OF MARYLAND

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Wes Moore

May 23, 2024

The Honorable Bill Ferguson
President of the Senate of Maryland
H-107 State House
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker of the House of Delegates
H-101 State House
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear President Ferguson and Speaker Jones:

After close review of House Bill 464/Senate Bill 795 *Health Occupations - Practice Audiology - Definition*, I have decided to allow the bills to pass into law without my signature or veto. I acknowledge and commend the General Assembly, particularly the Finance and Health and Government Operations Committees for their work with advocates to authorize audiologists to practice to the full extent of their training and provide appropriate access to care for Marylanders. However, discussions with proponents and opponents of the bill have made clear that the statute will require further clarification.

House Bill 464/Senate Bill 795 makes notable changes to the statutory definition for practice audiology with the goal of modernizing and updating the practice. I support the intent of the legislation to allow audiologists to practice to the full extent of their training; however, there are provisions of the bill that are quite broad and blur the difference between audiologists and otolaryngologists.

On page 2 of the bills, practice audiology is defined as “evaluating, diagnosing, managing, and treating auditory or vestibular conditions in the human ear.” The provision does not include clarifying language that the express actions should be specific to hearing loss or hearing disorder. In addition on the same page, the definition of practice audiology includes “the conducting of health screenings,” again with no other descriptive clauses to specify that the screenings should

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be related to the scope of hearing loss or disorders. Further refinement of these provisions is necessary to clarify the scope of practice audiology.

After hearing from both proponents and opponents, I recommend that all parties meet and collaborate on revisiting these statutes during the interim to ensure that the differences between audiology and otolaryngology are made more clear.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Wes Moore', is positioned above the printed name.

Wes Moore
Governor