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February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rhonda Baker, Chair  
Committee on Common Education  
Oklahoma House of Representatives  
2300 N. Lincoln Blvd  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Dear Representative Baker,

On behalf of the American Academy of Audiology (the Academy), I am writing in strong support of H.B. 3952. The Academy is the world's largest professional organization of, by and for audiologists. Representing the interests of audiologists in all practice settings, the Academy is dedicated to providing quality hearing care services through professional development, education, research, and increased public awareness of hearing and balance disorders.

H.B. 3952 would add an audiologist as a member of the State Department of Education Literacy Instruction Team. Audiologists are health care professionals who identify, assess and manage disorders of hearing, balance and other neural systems.<sup>1</sup> The ability to hear and listen to speech is directly linked to learning to read. The first skill in reading is learning to apply a sound to a particular letter—otherwise known as sound/letter association. Because learning to read is typically an auditory-based process, and audiologists are experts in audition, the addition of such a professional to the Literacy Instruction Team would be invaluable in helping families better understand the connection between hearing, listening, and reading.

Given the expertise of the audiologist in hearing and literacy development, the Academy is strongly supportive of H.B. 3952 that would add an audiologist to the State Department of Education Literacy Instruction Team. If you have any questions about the information included in this letter, please contact Susan Pilch, JD at [spilch@audiology.org](mailto:spilch@audiology.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick C. Gallagher".

Patrick Gallagher, MBA, Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> [What Is an Audiologist? | Johns Hopkins Medicine](#)