

April 16, 2025  
The Honorable Daniel Perez  
Florida House of Representatives  
420 The Capitol  
402 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

**Submitted via email:** [daniel.perez@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:daniel.perez@myfloridahouse.gov)

Dear Speaker Perez,

The American Academy of Audiology appreciates the opportunity to provide our feedback on Florida House Bill 1341. The Academy is the largest organization of, by, and for audiologists. We are dedicated to providing quality hearing and balance care services through professional development, education, research, and increased public awareness of hearing and balance disorders.

The Academy respectfully expresses our opposition to Florida HB 1341: Health Care Practitioner Identification. This bill's language, which has repeatedly been reintroduced despite failing in previous sessions, seeks to grant physicians exclusive claim to the title "Doctor." Existing Florida statutes already address the concerns this bill seeks to remedy, making this legislation redundant. Specifically, Florida Statute 458.331 expressly prohibits the misrepresentation of oneself as a physician and Florida Statute 817.567 addresses the deceptive use or falsification of academic degrees. Together, these laws provide robust protections for patients and maintain the integrity of healthcare provider identification.

Audiologists are highly trained healthcare professionals who complete years of intensive postgraduate education to earn their doctoral degrees. Their advanced academic and clinical preparation equips them to expertly diagnose and treat hearing and balance disorders. Before practicing independently, audiologists gain extensive hands-on experience with hundreds of patients and must meet rigorous licensure requirements. To maintain these standards, they also engage in ongoing continuing education, ensuring they provide the most current, evidence-based care. This depth of training and commitment positions audiologists as essential providers in the healthcare system, trusted to manage complex conditions that significantly impact patients' quality of life.

Audiologists follow best practices and professional standards by clearly introducing themselves as "Doctors of Audiology" and prominently displaying their credentials in both written and verbal communications—on name badges, lab coats, and promotional materials. These measures not only honor the extensive training and expertise represented by the title "Doctor," but also promote transparency and foster patient trust. Such clarity ensures patients understand the provider's qualifications, helping them make informed decisions about their care. Importantly, these standards are already enforceable under existing law, making further legislative action unnecessary.

For these reasons, the Academy strongly urges you to oppose HB 1341. This legislation is redundant with existing law and risks creating unnecessary confusion about the qualifications of audiologists compared to other healthcare providers. In today's complex healthcare landscape, where hearing and balance disorders demand specialized expertise, it is vital that patients can recognize their provider's qualifications. Transparency about the audiologist's credentials empowers patients to make informed decisions and distinguishes audiologists from other professionals without comparable education or training. Repeatedly reintroducing this bill only wastes valuable legislative time and taxpayer dollars without enhancing patient safety or understanding.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss these concerns further, please feel free to reach out to Joanne Zurcher, MPP, VP of Government Relations & Policy at [jzurcher@audiology.org](mailto:jzurcher@audiology.org). Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia Gaffney AuD, MPH". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Patricia" being the most prominent.

Patricia Gaffney, AuD, MPH  
President of the American Academy of Audiology

CC:

Members of the Full House Health & Human Services