

February 26, 2026

Honorable Matthew Koch
Kentucky House Standing Committee Licensing, Occupations, and Administrative Regulations
702 Capital Ave, Annex Room 316D
Frankfort, KY 40601

Dear Chair Koch,

On behalf of the American Academy of Audiology, the world's largest professional organization of, by, and for audiologists, I want to express the Academy's support of HB 444. This legislation focuses on efficiency and reducing barriers to patients' access to timely, coordinated, and effective care, particularly in underserved and rural areas.

Audiologists are the primary healthcare professionals who evaluate, diagnose, treat, and manage hearing loss and balance disorders in individuals of all ages, from infants to older adults. An audiologist's evaluation is the first step in determining if a need exists for further medical intervention and referral. Through HB 444, audiologists can order necessary testing to ensure that the consulting provider has the critical diagnostic information needed to develop a treatment plan.

The American Academy of Audiology recognizes the need to modernize outdated statutes and regulations that stymie the practice of audiology and its evolution to meet the needs of patients. Efforts at the federal and state levels to remove barriers and expand access are crucial to supporting audiologists in practicing at the top of their license. HB 444 prioritizes patient care by ensuring full access to comprehensive hearing and balance healthcare services in the most efficient way.

Sincerely,



David Zapala, PhD
President
American Academy of Audiology