

Submitter: Nawal Abdalkhalek
On Behalf Of: SB943
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB943

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Nawal, and I am currently a second-year audiology student at Pacific University in Oregon, where I also hold a master's degree in kinesiology and rehabilitation. As I prepare for my future career as an audiologist, I am writing to express my strong support for SB943. This bill will significantly enhance the ability of audiologists to provide high-quality care to patients of all ages, with particular benefit to pediatric populations. I believe this legislation will not only improve outcomes for children but will also strengthen the overall healthcare system in Oregon.

Throughout my education and clinical training, I have seen firsthand how critical timely and comprehensive diagnostic tools are, particularly for pediatric patients. Early identification and intervention are crucial in managing hearing loss and related conditions in children. By enabling audiologists to directly order MRIs, CT scans, and blood tests when clinically indicated, SB943 would streamline the diagnostic process, ensuring that children receive the necessary care as quickly as possible. This is especially important in Oregon, where access to specialized healthcare is limited in many rural and underserved areas. By granting audiologists the ability to order these diagnostic tests, we can reduce wait times, expedite diagnoses, and ensure that children receive timely interventions to improve their developmental outcomes.

As a future pediatric audiologist, I understand the profound impact early intervention can have on a child's development, particularly in cases of conditions like CMV, cochlear malformations, and auditory neuropathy. These conditions, when identified and treated early, can significantly improve a child's milestones and quality of life. Allowing audiologists to directly access these advanced diagnostic tools will make it easier to manage these conditions, which affect not only children but also adults. This ability would reduce the need for unnecessary specialist referrals and enable us to provide faster, more effective care.

SB943 will also significantly impact private practices that invest considerable time and resources into providing high-quality care for their patients. These practices, which are deeply committed to supporting children's developmental needs, will benefit greatly from the ability to order diagnostic tests directly. This would help reduce bottlenecks in the healthcare system and ensure that children can receive timely interventions without unnecessary delays.

SB943 is an important step in ensuring that audiologists in Oregon have the tools

they need to provide the most efficient and comprehensive care to patients of all ages. By supporting this bill, we are ensuring better health outcomes for children, faster interventions, and the best possible care for Oregon's residents.

Furthermore, as a future professional in the field, I am excited about the increased autonomy and responsibility this bill offers audiologists. It will allow us to play a more proactive role in diagnosing and managing conditions for patients of all ages, ensuring that the care we provide is both efficient and effective.

I strongly urge you to pass SB943, as it will improve access to essential diagnostic tools for audiologists and ensure quicker, more comprehensive care for children, adults, and seniors alike. This bill represents an important opportunity to enhance the healthcare system for all families, particularly those in rural or underserved areas, and to ensure that audiologists are equipped to meet the challenges of tomorrow's healthcare needs.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration. Your support of SB943 will have a lasting, positive impact on the care of children across Oregon and will shape the future of pediatric audiology and overall healthcare in our state.

Sincerely,
Nawal H.