



MEMORANDUM

To: Sen. Deb Patterson, Chair, Senate Health Care Committee
Sen. Cedric Hayden, Vice-Chair, Senate Health Care Committee
Members of the Senate Health Care Committee

From: Courtni Dresser, Vice President of Government Relations

Date: February 20, 2025

Re: OMA Comments on SB 943

The Oregon Medical Association (OMA) is a non-profit membership association community for over 7,000 physicians, physician associates, and medical and PA students in Oregon. The OMA strives to support healthcare policy that improves the practice of medicine for clinicians and their patients.

The OMA advocates for the highest standards in patient care and ensures that healthcare policies support safe, effective, and evidence-based practices. SB 943 is a scope of practice bill that expands scope without any expansion of training on part of the audiologists. At written we are opposed to SB 943, however, as mentioned by Senator Hayden, we have offered amendments that we feel update the scope but within the current training and expertise's of audiologists.

I want to be clear—we greatly value audiologists as essential members of the healthcare workforce. They play a crucial role in managing hearing and balance disorders, working closely with physicians to provide the best possible care. However, SB 943 seeks to grant expanded authority beyond their scope of training, which could lead to unintended consequences, including misdiagnosis and improper management of medical conditions that require a physician's expertise.

SB 943 fails to recognize the critical distinction between interpreting test results and making complex medical diagnoses—something that requires years of specialized education and clinical experience.

Our primary concerns with SB 943 include the lack of adequate training and competency assessments. The bill does not establish the rigorous educational and clinical training requirements equivalent to medical school and residency training, which are necessary for the expanded roles it proposes.

SB 943 also could lead to unsupervised medical decision-making by suggesting that non-physician practitioners could independently diagnose, treat, and manage conditions that traditionally require

physician oversight. These risks fragmenting care and bypassing the expertise of medical doctors in favor of convenience rather than evidence-based best practices.

While we strongly support collaborative care models that leverage the expertise of all healthcare providers, these expansions must be evidence-based and prioritize patient safety. At this time, we cannot support SB 943.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

The Oregon Medical Association (OMA) is the state's largest professional organization engaging in advocacy, policy, community-building, and networking opportunities for Oregon's physicians, physician associates medical students, and physician associate students. The OMA's members speak with one voice as they advocate for policies that improve access to quality patient care, reduce administrative burdens on medical professionals, and improve the health of all Oregonians. Additional information can be found at www.theOMA.org.