



HB 2195 In opposition

House Health and Human Services Committee Chair and Committee Members:

Good morning, I am emailing you this morning to inform you about an upcoming HB 2195. This bill proposed would require the Kansas Board of Hearing Aid Examiners (KBHAE) to be under the responsibility of KDADS (Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services). This concept would affect hundreds of consumers and hearing aid providers.

KBHAE has been protecting consumers, upholding licenses and handling consumer complaints since 1968. The KBHAE has been fee-funded since its creation almost 50 years ago, costing the state close to nothing. This is important because the passing of this bill, could add to the large budget deficit Kansas is currently facing today. The main purpose of KBHAE is consumer protection as outlined in their mission statement: "The KBHAE protects my interest as a consumer by ensuring that individuals engaging in the fitting of hearing aids in Kansas are properly licensed and practice in a manner which is in the best interest of the consumer". The KBHAE is efficient and effective at protecting consumer interest.

Under the new bill, consumer protection will not be improved by moving KBHAE under KDADS. The process for handling consumer complaints will be more prolonged and complicated. Today, KBHAE very efficiently handles complaints in 1 to 2 business days. If complaints require a hearing this is also carried out within days, not delayed by weeks. If additional consideration is required, then the complaint is reviewed by the Attorney General Office. It is both timely and cost-effective.

Our grandfather started a business helping Kansans hear better through the treatment of hearing aids in 1946. Our fathers and their brother continued the family tradition by getting their Hearing Instrument Specialist license from the KBHAE and now, Dr. Amber Pfeifer Au.D. has recently become a licensed audiologist by KBHAE and KDADS. Our family legacy is rooted in helping those with hearing loss find treatment through hearing aids. This bill would start a battle between audiologists and hearing instrument specialists over who is in charge of governing hearing aid providers. Currently KBHAE has a mixture of both hearing instrument specialists and audiologists who understand the rules and requirements that hearing aid providers are to follow. If KBHAE was to be under the control of KDADS, it would be governed by a board who doesn't understand the needs of the consumers and their providers. A move like HB 2195 will cost the state more money and will not be in the interest of our Kansas consumers in the long run.

Thank you for taking your time to read this,

Conner Hilderman
Patient Care Manager

Dr. Amber Pfeifer Au.D
Audiologist