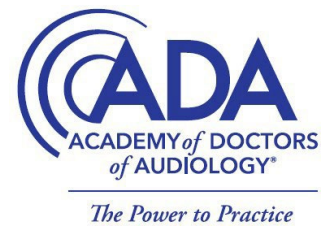


January 12, 2026



Chair Shae A. Sortwell
Assembly Committee on Regulatory Licensing Reform
Room 214 North
State Capitol
P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708

RE: **AB 820** - Practice of Audiology - Definition
Position: **SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Sortwell, Vice Chair Wichgers and Committee Members,

I write to you today on behalf of the Academy of Doctors of Audiology (ADA), a professional association representing audiologists in Wisconsin and across the United States, to support and endorse AB 820, which will make important updates to Wisconsin's audiology practice act to bring it into alignment with evidence-based practices in the delivery of hearing and balance care.

Audiologists are clinical doctoring professionals who are trained to evaluate, diagnose, manage, and treat hearing and balance conditions, and to identify conditions that require additional diagnostic testing and/or a referral to a physician or another clinical specialist. A Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.) degree is the first professional degree, required to become a clinical audiologist in all 50 states, including Wisconsin.

AB 820 will create greater consistency between existing Wisconsin regulations and statutes. For example, licensed audiologists are already authorized under Wisconsin regulations to perform cerumen management procedures and to prescribe prescription hearing aids. Audiologists also routinely perform non-radiographic imaging and scanning (earmold scanning and video otoscopy), using advanced techniques and technologies.

Additionally, audiologists are authorized and qualified to remove foreign bodies from the external auditory canal. They routinely encounter foreign bodies such as hearing aid filters, hearing aid domes, insects, rocks, and jewelry. Codifying their authority to remove foreign bodies from the external ear canal in statute can eliminate ambiguity and help reduce the number of unnecessary emergency room visits, which result in higher cost care, often delivered by lesser-trained providers.

Audiologists' formal clinical training and education is consistent with, or more advanced than other providers who are authorized to order cultures, blood tests, and radiographic imaging, and who are authorized to order topical prescription pharmaceutical agents under Wisconsin statutes. AB 820 also includes appropriate statutory limitations on audiologists' scope of practice, by explicitly prohibiting audiologists from performing surgery, radiographic imaging, and other services that are outside of their education and training.

Wisconsin also faces well-documented healthcare workforce shortages.^{1,2} For example, the Cicero Institute reports that 44 of Wisconsin's 72 counties are designated health professional shortage areas (HPSAs).³ Updating Wisconsin's audiology practice act to reflect audiologists' full education and training helps ensure patients can access safe, timely hearing and balance care while allowing physicians and other providers to focus on services that uniquely require their expertise.

The much-needed updates to Wisconsin's audiology practice act, as incorporated in AB 820, will improve access to safe effective audiologic care for the citizens of Wisconsin, provide greater patient choice, reduce cost, and improve outcomes.

AB 820 will harmonize regulations and statutes governing the practice of audiology and properly reflect the education, training, and skills that audiologists possess, while establishing appropriate consumer protections by limiting the practice of audiology to those services for which audiologists are educated and trained.

ADA encourages swift passage of AB 820. Please contact me at sczuhajewski@audiologist.org if I can provide additional information about the merits of AB 820 or if I can assist you in any way.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephanie Czuhaiewski".

Stephanie Czuhaiewski, MPH, CAE
Executive Director

¹ https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/wisconomy/wits_info/downloads/nurse-survey-reports/supply-nurse-reports/2024_WI%20RN%20Nurse%20Supply%20Demand%20Forecast%202022-2040.pdf

² <https://ciceroinstitute.org/research/wisconsin-physician-shortage-facts/>

³ See 2