

## Responses to Survey - Board of Hearing Aid Dispensers

Total responses: 7\*

<b>Highest Compliment</b>	Ability to monitor on behalf of licensees - 2 Ability to keep profession from criticism because of bad actors - 1	Ability to streamline Continuing Ed - 2 None - 2
<b>Biggest Complaint</b>	Licensing fees too high - 5 Licensing renewal timelines too strict - 1 Other: Lack of response to questions or concerns - 1 Slow response times for consumers - 1	Lack of Information - 1 None - 1 Board's response to unlicensed practice - 2 and Personal agendas of board members - 1 Failure to stop a bad actor - 1
<p><b>Reasons the board is important:</b> To organize licensing. Monitoring profession in all aspects                  --Boards are needed to keep standards and an effective licensing board will help keep "fly by nights" out of an industry..                  --Keeps the quality of our profession high and regulates those with unethical business practices.</p>		
<b>Public Health</b> - 1	<b>Public Welfare</b> - 3	<b>Public Safety</b> - <b>None of these</b> - 1 <b>All or combination</b> - 2
<b>Scope of Practice:</b>	<b>Too Narrow</b> - 4	<b>Too Broad</b> <b>Just Right</b> - 3
<p><b>Problems with other professions' scope of practice</b> - none listed (other than concern about audiologists no longer being dually licensed)</p>		
<p><b>What laws/regulations have caused the most problems?</b> None - 1                  -- Imposing outrageous fees - 1                  -- Allowing audiologists not to have a dispensing license - 1                  -- Although Audiologists have spent numerous years in college, they shouldn't be granted the right to forgo licensure for dispensing. What makes an audiologist automatically knowledgeable in the function of a hearing aid and fitting?                  -- Narrow scope of practice concerns: We are restricted from cleaning cerumen out of patients ears, before testing (2 commented on this), also we have to have a license for fitting hearing aids, but an Audiologist does not. That should be a important part of being able to fit people with hearing aids. But we have to know the same important information that they do, only we are specialists in HEARING AIDS They are not.                  -- 1. Extreme renewal rates. 2.Unfriendly board practices 3.Allowing competitors on the board. 4. Allowing consumer to return within 30 days for any reason.                  Washington and Wyoming stipulate malfunction, medical, malpractice, but not a mere change of mind. Very unfriendly small business practices from MT.</p>		
<p><b>Other comments:</b>                  --Washington State requires licensees to have a college degree to dispense hearing aids - making the license have higher merit.                  --It is very important to have a license in this field because there is a lot of selling for hearing health care that I feel should be illegal. Hearing aid fitting is not just a sale here and there, it helps people who cannot communicate because of not understanding speech. Patients will know that you KNOW what you are doing.. Not JUST SELLING.....Loss of Audiologists' licensing fees will drive hearing aid specialists' fees up.                  --Nothing good to say about the MT board. Washington and Wyoming boards are fine, follow the law. Boards are important to keep up standards and qualifications, but should remain a licensing board and not have competition or persons with personal agendas on the board. Montana is a broken board and has been for a very long time. NO FAITH IN THIS BOARD AT ALL. I deal with the board of MT, WA, &amp; WY and only ever have issues with the dealings of MT!                  --The highest licensing fee in the nation is unacceptable and cumbersome.</p>		
<b>Nonlicensee comments</b>	<p>Saying Board of Hearing Aid Dispensers Necessary for Public Health - 45, Public Safety - 35, Public Welfare - 32 All - 21</p> <p>SB 132 2011 removed audiologists from the licensure of the Board of Hearing Aid Dispensers. There are several reasons this is poor policy: Not all members of the Board of Speech Pathologists and Audiologists are currently PhD level. Some audiologists</p>	

Nonlicensee comments, continued	do not dispense hearing aids, and never have. If those audiologists are on the board, those dispensing audiologists could in fact be regulated by a board whose members may not have ever dispensed hearing aids: speech pathologists, public members and quite possibly, audiologists who do not dispense. Hearing aid dispensers are left to pay licensing fees approaching \$800, a truly prohibitive amount. The underlying statutes governing audiologists require thorough legislative review. I contend that they are flawed. There was no companion bill to SB 132 that changed the makeup of the Hearing Aid Dispenser board. That board still has audiologists on it, but none are regulated by that board. The opportunity for abuse and chilling of competition is plain.
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as of 10/3/2011 **Note:** 6 Respondents were not board members One respondent had been a member of a board.