Whereas, audiologists are licensed with a defined scope of practice in all fifty states and the District of Columbia as independent healthcare providers for services relating to the hearing and vestibular/balance systems, and

Whereas, approximately 36 million American adults report some degree of hearing loss with that number expected to increase significantly as the Baby Boomer generation ages, and

Whereas, audiologists want to ensure the accessibility and affordability of high-quality audioligic services to meet the expanding needs of patients requiring care for hearing and vestibular/balance disorders, and

Whereas, audiologists uphold similar standards of professional development as physicians and other non-physician healthcare providers, and absorb the costs associated with the establishment and maintenance of a clinical practice, including its facilities, equipment, and support staff, and

Whereas, audiologist assistants are important to the sustainability of the profession of audiology, and can provide valuable support to audiologists in the delivery of quality and cost-effective services to patients, and

Whereas, audiologist assistants can improve access to patient care by increasing availability of audioligic services; increasing productivity by reducing wait times and enhancing patient satisfaction; and reducing costs by enabling assistants to perform tasks that do not require the skills of a licensed audiologist, and

Whereas, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the U.S. Military utilize audiologist assistants effectively to improve access to and quality of care, and

Whereas, twenty-three states currently have a provision in state statutes to define the practice of audiology assistants, and

Whereas, licensed audiologists, by virtue of their education and training, are the appropriate and only qualified professionals to supervise and train audiologist assistants, and

Whereas, audiologist assistants would, at a minimum, possess a high school diploma or equivalent; and complete competency-based training or a formal audiologist assistant training program (as appropriate and consistent with state rules and regulations), and

Whereas, the audiologist who employs and/or supervises audiologist assistants shall maintain legal and ethical responsibility for all services provided by the assistant, and shall not delegate any service requiring professional competence to unqualified persons.
RESOLVED, the American Academy of Audiology supports the appropriate use and supervision of audiologist assistants to position the profession of audiology to meet the expanding needs for patient care in a cost-effective manner, and without compromise to said patient care.

References:


