

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

1 State of Arkansas  
2 84th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2003  
4

*As Engrossed: S4/3/03*  
**A Bill**

SENATE BILL 907

5 By: Senators B. Johnson, Broadway, *Faris*  
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8 **For An Act To Be Entitled**

9 AN ACT TO ASSURE FREEDOM OF CHOICE FOR  
10 INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SERVICES FROM LICENSED  
11 AUDIOLOGISTS; TO ASSURE EQUAL PAYMENT OR  
12 REIMBURSEMENT TO LICENSED AUDIOLOGISTS; AND FOR  
13 OTHER PURPOSES.  
14

15 **Subtitle**

16 AN ACT TO ASSURE FREEDOM OF CHOICE FOR  
17 INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SERVICES FROM  
18 LICENSED AUDIOLOGISTS AND TO ASSURE  
19 EQUAL PAYMENT OR REIMBURSEMENT TO  
20 LICENSED AUDIOLOGISTS.  
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23 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
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25 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 20-77-506 is amended to read as follows:  
26 20-77-506. Right of freedom of choice.

27 (a) Every person eligible for an eye examination the payment for which  
28 shall or may be made out of public money is guaranteed his or her freedom of  
29 choice between persons licensed under the Arkansas Optometry Practices Act, §  
30 17-90-101 et seq., ~~and~~ persons licensed under the Arkansas Medical Practices  
31 Act, § 17-95-201 et seq., and persons licensed under the Arkansas Medical  
32 Practices Act, § 17-95-201 et seq., or either of the persons.

33 (b) Every person eligible for an ear examination the payment for which  
34 shall or may be made out of public money is guaranteed his or her freedom of  
35 choice between persons licensed under the Licensure Act of Speech-Language  
36 Pathologists and Audiologists, § 17-100-100 et seq., or persons licensed



1 under the Arkansas Medical Practices Act, § 17-95-201 et seq., or either of  
2 the persons.

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4 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 23-79-114 is amended to add a new  
5 subsection to read as follows:

6 (g)(1) Notwithstanding any provision of any individual or group policy  
7 of accident and health insurance or any provision of a policy, contract,  
8 plan, or agreement for hospital or medical service or indemnity, wherever the  
9 policy, contract, plan, or agreement provides for payment or reimbursement  
10 for any service in the audiology field provided by persons licensed as  
11 audiologists under the Licensure Act of Speech-Language Pathologists and  
12 Audiologists, § 17-100-101 et seq., the person entitled to benefits or the  
13 person performing services under the policy, contract, plan, or agreement is  
14 entitled to payment or reimbursement on an equal basis for the service when  
15 the service is performed by any person licensed as an audiologist under § 17-  
16 100-101 et seq.

17 (2) No person entitled to benefits under this subsection shall  
18 be denied his or her freedom of choice of any practitioner licensed under §  
19 17-95-201 et seq. or § 17-100-101 et seq., by any insurer or agent or employee  
20 of the insurer or by any department, agency, or employee of this state.

21 (3)(A) Nothing in this subsection (f) shall be construed to  
22 enlarge or diminish the practice of audiology as defined under § 17-100-103.

23 (B) Under state law, sole and complete authority regarding  
24 determination of those acts, services, procedures, and practices which  
25 constitute the practice of audiology in this state shall be vested in the  
26 Board of Examiners in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology.

27 (C) This section shall specifically include, but not be  
28 limited to, authority of the Board of Examiners in Speech-Language Pathology  
29 and Audiology to define the parameters of management and co-management of  
30 persons licensed under § 17-100-101 et seq. in the treatment and management  
31 of hearing and disorders of hearing.

32 (4) The purpose of this subsection is to ensure that persons  
33 licensed under the Arkansas Medical Practices Act, § 17-95-201 et seq., or  
34 Licensure Act of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists, § 17-100-101  
35 et seq., shall be entitled to payment or reimbursement on an equal basis for  
36 service in audiology field.

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*/s/ B. Johnson*