

**NICK CHARLES**  
*Legislative District 25*  
Prince George's County

Health and Government  
Operations Committee

*Subcommittees*

Health Occupations and  
Long Term Care

Insurance and Pharmaceuticals



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**THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES**  
**ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

**HB1112- Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact**

**Sponsor: Delegate Charles**

**CoSponsors: Bagnall, B. Barnes, Carr, Cullison, Henson, Hill, Ivey, Johnson, Kelly, Pena-Melnyk, Washington, Williams.**

**Hearing: March 10, 1pm – HGO**

The Maryland Speech-Language-Hearing Association and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association together have asked for this bill.

Audiologists and speech therapists diagnose and manage communication disorders. Audiologists focus on disorders relating to hearing and balance and may manage disorders with hearing aids, cochlear implants or audiology rehab. In addition to treating the disorder, they can counsel and educate patients and their families around the psychological and social adjustments of hearing loss.

Speech Language Pathologists, also sometimes known as speech therapists, diagnose and treat disorders relating to speech, language, communicating socially, understanding language, feeding and swallowing.

Audiologists and speech therapists frequently work together with physicians, teachers, psychologists, social workers, physical therapists, occupational therapists and rehab counselors in an interdisciplinary team for the benefit of the whole person.

This bill:

- The bill is an interstate licensing compact for audiologists and speech language pathologists.
- This is a new compact, similar to the Physical Therapists compact we passed last year.
- It would go into effect when the 10th state passes this bill. Maryland is one of the first to consider this compact. It's been introduced in 7 states so far, including Maryland.
- It will enable audiologists and speech language pathologists licensed in other states to work in Maryland, where we have a shortage of both professions.

- o When someone moves into our state, they can wait months for the paperwork to be able to begin using their license to see Maryland patients. This is especially important for military spouses as we have such a significant military presence in Maryland. With this bill, they'll have the ability to settle into Maryland life and a new job sooner.
- o Helping these licensed professionals begin treating patients sooner will help alleviate the shortage.
- It will also enable Maryland professionals to continue seeing their patients if they travel out of state by authorizing treatment by telehealth (videoconferencing) (for instance, a child of divorced parents moving for school holidays or a student leaving for college).
- It upholds Maryland's licensing standards. Any provider whose initial license is based in another compact state will be required to comply with Maryland's practice standards if ours are higher.

The Attorney General raised some concern a few weeks ago- those have been addressed by the amendment submitted.

For these reasons, I urge your favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Charles". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "C" at the end.

Nick Charles  
Maryland State Delegate - District 25