



February 10, 2020

Delegate Pendergrass
Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: House Bill 1112: Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact

Dear Chairperson Pendergrass,

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland Speech Language Hearing Association to request your favorable report for HB 1112: Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact. The Maryland Speech-Language-Hearing Association (MSHA) is a professional association comprised of over speech/language pathologists and audiologists working in various settings across Maryland. MSHA advocates for people of all ages who have speech, language, swallowing and/or hearing disabilities.

AT this time, when a licensed professional leaves one state to work in another, they must undergo the licensing process in their new state. This results in a lag in starting a job, increased expense for the practitioner and delays in receiving services for patients. Passage of HB 1112 would:

- increase public access to audiology and speech-language pathology services by providing for the mutual recognition of other member state licenses;
- Enhance the states' ability to protect the public's health and safety;
- Encourage the cooperation of member states in regulating multistate audiology and speech-language pathology practice;
- Support spouses of relocating active duty military personnel;
- Enhance the exchange of licensure, investigative and disciplinary information between member states;
- Allow a remote state to hold a provider of services with a Compact privilege in that state accountable to that state's practice standards; and
- Allow for the use of telehealth technology to facilitate increased access to audiology and speech language pathology services.

Thank you for your consideration on behalf of individuals with communication, hearing and swallowing disorders and the therapist who serve them. I hope that you will give HB 1112 a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Bell
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