

01/25/2021

Senator Pinsky
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Senate Bill 183: Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact

Dear Chairperson Pinsky,

I am writing to request your favorable report for SB 183: Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact.

I am a licensed speech-language pathologist of 25 years with 22 of those years serving the public schools and the Birth to 5 program in Maryland. I began my career in Missouri in the nursing homes, then moved to South Carolina due to my husband's military MOS transferring and I transferring with my employer, NovaCare, and also joining a private therapy company with pediatric home health, then to Maryland for my husband's job transfer and transition from USMC to the Maryland National Guard where I began my new career placement into Somerset County public schools system.

I am the spouse of a member of the military. We were stationed at Parris Island, SC our first two years of marriage. We, then, had to transfer to Maryland. My husband served 14.5 years combined in the USMC and the Maryland National Guard/US Army. He completed a 370 days boots on ground tour during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, along with several others from March, 2003 until May, 2004, leaving just 11 weeks after our first child was born.

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. **I experienced this personally on two occasions, once when moving to South Carolina and the second time when moving to Maryland.**

Passage of SB 183 would address increased demand to provide/receive audiology and speech-language pathology services. It would authorize both telehealth and in-person practice across state lines in ASLP-IC states. It is similar in form and function to occupational licensure compacts for nursing, psychology, medicine, physical therapy and emergency medical services. It would increase public access to audiology and speech-language pathology services by providing for the

mutual recognition of other member state licenses. It would enhance the states' ability to protect the public's health and safety. It would also encourage the cooperation of member states in regulating multistate audiology and speech-language pathology practice, supports 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 last but not least, it would allow for the use of telehealth technology to facilitate increased access to audiology and speech language pathology services.

As of January 2021, the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact has been enacted in six states: West Virginia, North Carolina, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Wyoming and Utah.

Thank you for your consideration on behalf of individuals with communication, hearing and swallowing disorders and the therapists who serve them. I hope that you will give SB183 a favorable report. It would be much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Robey French, MS CCC-SLP
Speech-Language Pathologist