

January 24, 2021

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

Re: House Bill 288: Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact

Dear Chairperson Pendergrass,

I am writing to request your favorable report for HB 288: Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact.

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

I am a licensed speech-language pathologist and have been working in Maryland since 1997. I started as a contractor in Baltimore City Schools (Edmonson Elem/Middle - 3 years) and have since owned my own private practice and now speech-language clinic for the last 20+ years.

This legislation affects how I do my job and the K-12/college children and families I serve. I could bore you with the many licensure woes I experienced here in Maryland and in Delaware, but that would take too long. I need to be able to serve the students I work with wherever they reside and from other states when I travel.

At this time, when 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 SB 183 would:

- Addresses increased demand to provide/receive audiology and speech-language pathology services.
- Authorizes both telehealth and in-person practice across state lines in ASLP-IC states.
- Is similar in form and function to occupational licensure compacts for nursing, psychology, medicine, physical therapy, and emergency medical services.
- Increases public access to audiology and speech-language pathology services by providing for

- the mutual recognition of other member state licenses;
- Enhances the states' ability to protect the public's health and safety;
 - Encourages the cooperation of member states in regulating multistate audiology and speech-language pathology practice;
 - Supports spouses of relocating active duty military personnel;
 - Enhances the exchange of licensure, investigative and disciplinary information between member states;
 - Allows a remote state to hold a provider of services with a Compact privilege in that state accountable to that state's practice standards; and
 - Allows 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.

This is the second letter I have written about the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact in the last year. That's how much this would benefit our state. Maryland has always been a forward-thinker and at the forefront of fighting for children and their families. Please support Senate Bill 183 to make this a reality in our state and nation-wide.

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.

Sincerely,

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