

February 1, 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 have been a licensed speech-language pathologist for the past 16 years.

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 288 would:

- Address increased demand to provide/receive audiology and speech-language pathology services.
- Authorize both telehealth and in-person practice across state lines in ASLP-IC states.
- Be similar in form and function to occupational licensure compacts for nursing, psychology, medicine, physical therapy and emergency medical services.
- 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.

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 professionals who serve them. I hope that you will give HB 288 a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Christina Yeager Pelatti, Ph.D., CCC-SLP