

AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS - 2026 REGULAR SESSION

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SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

{Indicate if analysis is on an original bill, amendment, substitute or a correction of a previous bill}

Date Prepared: 1/21/2026 **Check all that apply:**
Bill Number: HB 11 Original Correction
 Amendment Substitute

Sponsor: <u>Elizabeth Thomson</u> Short Title: <u>Audiology & Speech-Language Pathology Compact</u>	Agency Name and Code Number:	<u>Regulation & Licensing Dept. (RLD), 420</u>
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SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27		
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27	FY28		
N/A	Unknown*	Unknown*	Recurring	Speech-language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Practices Board Fund

(Parenthesis () indicate revenue decreases)

* See Note 1 in Fiscal Implications for a discussion of the possible impact on revenue.

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY26	FY27	FY28	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	Unknown ⁺ **	70.0	0.0	70.0	Nonrecurring	Speech-language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Practices Board Fund
Total	Unknown**	16.0 + **Unknown	76.0 + **Unknown	92.0 + **Unknown	Recurring	Speech-language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Practices Board Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

**There could be an impact on operating budget due to an “annual assessment” and fees for “adverse actions in other states” that may be imposed on states as members of the Compact. See Note 3 and Note 5 in the “Fiscal Implications” section below.

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to:

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis: House Bill 11 (HB 11)

HB11 enacts the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact (ASLP Compact) to allow licensed audiologists and speech-language pathologists (SLP's) a “compact privilege” to practice in participating states without requiring another license. It also amends the Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology, and Hearing Aid Dispensers Practices Act (“Act”) to require federal and state background checks for applicants, a requirement to join the compact. The ASLP Compact purports to expand public access to services, support telehealth, enhance information sharing among states, improve regulatory cooperation, and assist military families by allowing greater license portability.

To date, thirty-six (36) states have adopted the ASLP Compact, including every state bordering New Mexico, except Texas. However, only two (2) states are currently issuing compact privileges, Louisiana and West Virginia. Compact privileges and the ASLP Compact data sharing system have been active since October 2025.

Under the ASLP Compact, a practitioner’s home state license serves as the basis for the “compact privilege” to practice in other member states, including via telehealth, as long as the state requires

the following uniform eligibility requirements:

1. Fingerprint or biometric background checks for all applicants;
2. Communication between member states regarding verification of eligibility;
3. Verification of good standing in a member state by a remote state when the licensee seeks a compact privilege to practice in that remote state;
4. Recognition of every member state of the license requirement in the home state.

Additionally, every audiologist who wishes to obtain a compact privilege in a remote state must meet the following requirements:

1. A doctoral degree in audiology from an accredited institution if they graduated in 2008, or later, or at least a master's degree in audiology from an accredited institution if they graduated in 2007 or earlier, or a foreign country's degree that is substantially similar to these requirements;
2. Completed a supervised clinical practicum;
3. Passed the national exam;
4. Holds an active, unencumbered license;
5. Has not been convicted or found guilty of a felony related to the practice of audiology; and
6. Has a valid Social Security number or national practitioner number.

Every SLP who wishes to obtain a compact privilege in a remote state must meet the following requirements:

1. A master's degree in a speech-language pathology program from an accredited institution, or a foreign country's degree that is substantially similar to these requirements;
2. Completed a supervised clinical practicum;
3. Completed post-graduate supervised professional experience (often called a clinical fellow year);
4. Passed the national exam;
5. Holds an active, unencumbered license;
6. Has not been convicted or found guilty of a felony related to the practice of speech-language pathology; and
7. Has a valid social security number or national practitioner number.

The ASLP Compact establishes detailed definitions, eligibility standards, and procedures governing compact privileges, including how privileges are obtained, maintained, suspended, or lost when a license becomes encumbered or when a practitioner changes their primary state of residence. It provides special provisions for active-duty military members and their spouses, allowing them to designate and retain a home state license while on active duty.

The ASLP Compact creates the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Compact Commission (Commission), a multi-state governing body composed of two (2) voting delegates from each member state, including one (1) licensed audiologist and one (1) SLP. The Commission has the authority to adopt bylaws, promulgate binding rules, manage finances, collect fees and assessments, oversee compliance, and administer the compact. The Commission is empowered to conduct meetings, establish committees, maintain a centralized data system (CompactConnect), and coordinate investigations and enforcement actions among states.

The Commission oversees the development of CompactConnect. The data system collects licensure, disciplinary, and investigative information and shares that information among participating states. The Commission's rulemaking requirements include public notice, time for public comment, hearings, emergency rules, and legislative rejection of rules by member states.

The ASLP Compact also provides qualified immunity, defense, and indemnification for Commission members and staff acting within the scope of their duties. It establishes mechanisms for dispute resolution, enforcement, and legal action against noncompliant member states.

The ASLP Compact became effective once it was enacted by ten (10) states. It is now effective on each state that adopts the compact immediately on the effective date of the legislation. Member states may withdraw by repealing the ASLP Compact with six (6) months' notice. Amendments to the ASLP Compact are only effective if unanimously enacted by all member states.

Finally, HB 11 amends New Mexico's Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Practices Act to authorize state and federal criminal history background checks for applicants, aligning state law with the ASLP Compact's requirements.

The effective date of HB 11 would be May 20, 2026.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

NOTE 1: Licensees who wish to practice under a compact privilege, must pay a fifty dollar (\$50) administrative fee to the Commission. The Commission will also charge a state-specific fee and provide that fee to the member state. Member states may set the fee amount. Currently, the fee for an audiologist or SLP license in New Mexico is one hundred and twenty dollars (\$120) for an initial application, and two hundred and twenty dollars (\$220) for biennial license renewal.

It is not possible at this time to predict if the ASLP Compact will bring in more licensees to New Mexico and thereby increase fee revenue, or if the cost of obtaining compact privileges will be significantly less than the cost of obtaining full licensure in New Mexico, thus encouraging some licensees to forego obtaining full licensure in New Mexico and reducing New Mexico's license fee revenue. An amendment to Section 61-14B-20 of the Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Practices Act (Act) will be necessary for the New Mexico Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Practices Board (Board) to promulgate rules that allow the Board to charge for compact privileges. (See Amendments below.)

NOTE 2:

As the ASLP only recently became operational, it is unclear what information technology (IT) requirements will be required of participating states to use CompactConnect. It is anticipated that the system will connect with participating states through an application programming interface (API). Such a system would require the Board and the Regulation and Licensing Department (RLD) to incur some costs to integrate CompactConnect's API into the RLD's NM Plus online licensing system and to pay for the ongoing costs of the MuleSoft software to translate the data. The RLD has some experience in integrating APIs into its current system as it has already done so for other licensed professionals. As a result, there is an idea of what costs it can reasonably expect to incur in integrating API systems into the RLD's NM Plus system. While these costs can fluctuate based on various factors, the RLD anticipates a one-time cost for implementation of approximately seventy thousand dollars (\$70,000) for two (2) APIs.

In addition, when utilizing the API process, NM Plus requires the use of MuleSoft, a Salesforce-based software, to process and translate the data that is received from an API. Multiple factors go into the costs involved with utilizing the MuleSoft software, but RLD estimates a recurring cost of utilizing the MuleSoft program to be approximately sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000) for two (2) API's.

An administrative rulemaking process, including a public hearing and all required publication of notices and proposed rules, would be required to update and amend current administrative rules issued pursuant to the Act if HB 11 is enacted. The RLD believes it can absorb the costs associated with the rulemaking processes for this bill within existing resources.

NOTE 3: The Board "may" be required to pay an annual assessment based on a formula to be determined by the Commission. Currently, the Commission is not assessing annual fees to be paid by the participating state boards, but this could change should the administrative fees collected from practitioners fail to meet the financial obligations of the Commission. The RLD is unable to determine at this time what the dollar amount of that annual assessment would be, or if it will actually be imposed in any given fiscal year.

NOTE 4: If HB 11 is enacted, the Board may incur out-of-state travel expenses for its Commission delegate members to attend annual meetings. Per the Compact By-Laws, travel and expense reimbursements are subject to pre-approval and the availability of budgeted funds for the commission. It is unclear whether the travel costs will be covered by the Commission, the attending delegates, or the Board itself. However, there is a possibility that expenses for the delegate's attendance will need to be covered. If the Board is responsible for these costs, the potential expenses—such as airfare, hotel, meals, ride share/taxi, etc.—are unknown at this time but are estimated to cost two thousand dollars (\$2,000) per day for each of the two (2) delegates, with an estimated four (4) days of travel and attendance each year. Therefore, the RLD anticipates a resulting expense of sixteen thousand dollars (\$16,000) per year in FY27 and future years.

NOTE 5: With respect to Section 8 of the bill, "Adverse Actions," the issuing state would incur expenses related to taking adverse action against a practitioner's compact privilege within a member state. The issuing state is responsible for paying any witness fees, travel expenses, mileage and other fees required by the service statutes of the state in which the witnesses or evidence are located. Potential expenses that may be incurred by the RLD on behalf of the Board under this provision cannot be reasonably estimated at this time.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Board has indicated strong support for the bill. The Board believes it will improve access to patient care by: (1) making the state more attractive to current practitioners residing outside of New Mexico with plans to relocate to the state; and (2) increasing access to telehealth services for underserved and rural areas of the state.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

Please see issues and comments provided in the "Fiscal Implications" and "Significant Issues" above.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Enactment of this bill would require the Board to initiate rulemaking to adopt rules in accordance

with the requirements, procedures and bylaws of the Compact. Administrative rulemaking in New Mexico must follow the requirements of the State Rules Act, which can be anticipated to take takes a minimum of one hundred and twenty (120) days from the time an authority begins to develop rule language, provide public notice of proposed rules, allow for public review and comment, conduct a public rule hearing, comply with the requirements for final adoption of rules, and complete the required publication of the rules before such rules take legal effect. Among other rules that will have to be amended or created to meet the requirements of the ASLP Compact, the Board must adopt rules for applicants to submit to federal background checks based on fingerprints.

Federal Background Checks and Fingerprinting will require a contract. This would be an addition to RLD's existing contract for these services for other boards.

In addition, administrative staff at the RLD providing support to the Board will require training on how to report and obtain licensing and disciplinary action information with CompactConnect.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

TECHNICAL ISSUES

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

ALTERNATIVES

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Without passing this legislation, the state of New Mexico may be seen as being less competitive, as many states in the surrounding area have joined the ASLP. Additionally, there will likely be economic repercussions due to lack of healthcare providers and continued lack of health care accessibility in underserved and rural areas if the bill is not enacted.

AMENDMENTS

An amendment is needed to allow the Board to charge state-specific fees for a compact privilege endorsement for existing licensed audiologists and SLP's, a Compact Privilege Audiologist, and a Compact Privilege SLP in Section 61-14B-20 of the Act.

To ensure there is sufficient time for necessary administrative rules to be developed and adopted, the NM Plus licensing system has been properly updated, and required API to connect to the ASLP's CompactConnect data system are operation, the RLD requests that the effective date of HB 11 be amended to January 1, 2027.