

LFC Requester:	
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**AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS - 2026 REGULAR SESSION**

**WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, UPLOAD ANALYSIS TO**  
**[AgencyAnalysis.nmlegis.gov](http://AgencyAnalysis.nmlegis.gov) and email to [billanalysis@dfa.nm.gov](mailto:billanalysis@dfa.nm.gov)**  
***(Analysis must be uploaded as a PDF)***

**SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION**

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

**Date Prepared:** 1/29/26 **Bill Number:** HB211 **Original**  **Amendment**  **Substitute**

**Short Title:** SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY ASSISTANT LICENSURE

**Sponsor:** Rep. Liz Thomson

**Name and Code Number:** HCA 630

**Person Writing:** Kresta Opperman

**Phone:** 505 231-8752 **Email:** kresta.opperman @hca.nm.gov

**SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT**

**APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)**

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	F0Y27		
\$0.0	\$0.0	N/A	N/A

(Parenthesis ( ) indicate expenditure decreases)

**REVENUE (dollars in thousands)**

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27	FY28		
\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	N/A	N/A

(Parenthesis ( ) indicate revenue decreases)

**ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)**

	<b>FY26</b>	<b>FY27</b>	<b>FY28</b>	<b>3 Year Total Cost</b>	<b>Recurring or Nonrecurring</b>	<b>Fund Affected</b>
<b>Total</b>	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	N/A	N/A

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

**SECTION III: NARRATIVE**

**BILL SUMMARY**

Synopsis:

HB211 would create a new licensure for Speech-Language Pathology Assistants (SLPA). It would also provide for a delayed repeal of the apprentice in speech and language license and repeals certain sections of the New Mexico Statutes.

The provisions for Sections 1-8 are effective July 1, 2026. Sections 1-8 amend NM statutes by adding Speech-Language Pathology Assistants.

The provisions for Sections 9-11, which are effective January 1, 2028, remove apprentice in speech-language pathology and add new licensure for speech-language pathology assistant.

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

Both Medicare and NM Medicaid do not currently cover services provided by a by speech-language pathology assistants (SLPA). However, if this bill is enacted HCA could evaluate reimbursing speech language pathologists (SLP) who are supervising a SLPA. This may increase access and utilization of services which may result in increased expenditures.

**SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

MAD frequently uses Medicare as the baseline for covering services. Services of SLPA are not recognized for Medicare coverage. Medicare identifies services provided by SLPA, even if they are licensed to provide services in their states, will be considered unskilled services and denied as not reasonable and necessary if they are billed. Reference: PUB 100-02 Transmittal Number: R13051BP dated 1/16/25. .

MAD does not reimburse physical therapy assistants (PTA) or occupational assistants (OTA). However, MAD reimburses physical therapists and occupational therapists who are supervising a PTA or OTA by using appropriate modifiers to identify services provided with a PTA or an OTA which aligns with Medicare coverage. HCA would need to determine if the same methodology would be implemented for SPLA.

The Medicaid School-Based Services (MSBS) Program would allow for reimbursement for services provided by a SLPA under the supervision of a MAD-enrolled SLP. This is consistent with the current program coverage for services provided by a Speech Language Apprentice, Physical Therapy Assistant and Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant. The MSBS NMAC 8.320.6 would have to be amended along with other program guidance documents to include the new licensure category if enacted.

## **PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

Coverage of Speech Language Therapy services are expressly part of an existing benefit described in [NMAC 8.325.8](#) and [NMAC 8.320.2](#). Coverage of SLP provided by SLPA may result in a slight increase in reviews for prior authorizations (completed by third party assessor, TPA), Medicaid recipient access to SLP services and reimbursement of medically necessary SLP services. HB211 aligns with HCA's mission, goals and objectives.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

Implementation timeline would be approximately 12 months from legislative approval to capture necessary NMAC revisions, billing guidance, claims processing system edits to capture services provided by SLPA.

## **CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP**

None at this time.

## **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

None.

## **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

None at this time.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

None at this time.

## **WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL**

Status Quo

## **AMENDMENTS**

None at this time.