

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE  
BILL ANALYSIS**

**Bill Number:** HB 475a

**50th Legislature, 1st Session, 2011**

**Tracking Number:** .184690.2

**Short Title:** Speech & Hearing Therapist Revisions

**Sponsor(s):** Representatives Eliseo Lee Alcon and W. Ken Martinez

**Analyst:** James Ball

**Date:** March 9, 2011

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**AS AMENDED**

**The House Taxation and Revenue Committee amendments, when referencing a designation recognizing expertise in bilingual and multilingual services on speech language pathologist (SLP) licenses:**

- **strike the term “endorsement” and in lieu thereof insert the term “specialty”;**
- **strike the term “issued” and in lieu thereof insert the term “granted”;**
- **clarify that the licenses in question are those issued pursuant to the *Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Practices Act*; and**
- **strike language that would require SLPs currently licensed in New Mexico or in other states or countries to apply for the specialty designation as initial licensure applicants.**

**Original Bill Summary:**

HB 475 amends the *Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Practices Act* to:

- add a scope of practice for clinical fellows of speech-language pathology;
- change the scope of practice for audiologists to incorporate the scope of practice for hearing aid dispensers;
- add a speech-language pathologist to the Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology, and Hearing Aid Dispensing Practices Board, thereby increasing the membership of the board from 10 to 11 members;
- change the licensure requirements for audiologists to permit practitioners to dispense hearing aids without obtaining a second license;
- change the licensure requirements for hearing aid dispensers to meet additional education requirements of the board;
- require clinical fellows and speech-language pathology apprentices to work under appropriate supervision, as defined in the bill;
- change the scope of the hearing aid dispensing examination to include the fitting and adjustment of hearing aids;
- change the licensing renewal period from annual to biennial and provide for staggered biennial terms;
- allow clinical fellows two years to pass a recognized standard national examination;

- permit hearing aid dispenser licenses to be renewed by dispensers providing evidence of national board certification;
- increase the maximum amounts the board is able to charge for licensure and renewals;
- create requirements for a bilingual or multilingual licensure endorsement; and
- repeal the section of the law related to the endorsement to dispense hearing aids as an audiologist or otolaryngologist.

**Fiscal Impact:**

HB 475 does not contain an appropriation.

**Substantive Issues:**

According to the analysis of HB 475 by the Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Practices Board of the Regulation and Licensing Department, the changes set forth in the bill will update and clarify the scope of practice and licensure definitions as well as align state licensure requirements with national standards.

In addition, the board notes in its analysis that approximately 95 percent of the issues brought before the board are related to speech-language pathology. Adding another speech-language pathology member will help alleviate the workload from the two speech-language pathology members currently on the board.

**Background:**

According to the website of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, an organization that establishes national standards in the field of speech language pathology and audiology, the association:

- establishes and maintains rigorous academic standards to prepare incoming professionals at a high level of academic quality;
- maintains an accreditation program, administered by the Council of Academic Accreditation, which ensures that the strength and integrity of degrees in the field will be recognized and maintained nationally; and
- is a leader in establishing and enforcing ethical standards for audiology and speech-language pathology to protect the reputation and integrity of the professions and help ensure the welfare of those served.

**Related Bills:**

None as of March 9, 2011.