



AMERICAN
SPEECH-LANGUAGE-
HEARING
ASSOCIATION

May 31, 2018

The Honorable John Bel Edwards
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

RE: H.B. 372

Dear Governor Edwards:

On behalf of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, I write to ask you to veto H.B. 372, which would establish an Occupational Licensing Review Commission responsible for supervising state executive branch occupational licensing boards including the review of regulations that an occupational licensing board is seeking to promulgate.

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) is the national professional, scientific, and credentialing association for 198,000 members and affiliates who are audiologists; speech-language pathologists; speech, language, and hearing scientists; audiology and speech-language pathology support personnel; and students. Over 2,900 of our members reside in Louisiana.

Audiologists and speech-language pathologists are represented on the Louisiana Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (Board) and possess the expertise to analyze and assess any proposed changes to the scope of practice for their professions. The Board composition also provides for a public member who is an individual, family member, or spouse of someone with a communication disorder. Under current law, the Board is charged with insuring the safety and welfare of the public they serve.

Audiologists in Louisiana hold a doctoral degree (or equivalent) in audiology, have completed a supervised clinical practicum, and have passed an exam approved by the Board. Speech-language pathologists hold a master's degree (or equivalent) in speech-language pathology, have completed a supervised clinical practicum, have passed an exam also approved by the Board, and have completed at least 36 weeks of full-time supervised postgraduate professional employment or its part-time equivalent.

ASHA urges you to veto H.B. 372, which is unnecessary and potentially expensive legislation. Autonomous licensure boards have been the most effective tool for handling consumer issues and maintaining quality standards for the professionals who serve them. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Eileen Crowe, ASHA's director of state association relations, at ecrowe@asha.org.

Sincerely,

Elise Davis-McFarland, PhD, CCC-SLP
2018 ASHA President