



ASHA
American
Speech-Language-Hearing
Association

February 28, 2022

The Honorable Dafna Michaelson Jenet
Chair, House Committee on Public and
Behavioral Health and Human Services
200 East Colfax Avenue, Room HCR 0112
Denver, CO 80203-1784

RE: Support for Continuation of Speech-Language Pathology Practice Act; HB 22-1213

Dear Representative Jenet:

On behalf of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, I write in support of HB 22-1213, which continues the Speech-Language Pathology Practice Act for 11 more years.

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) is the national professional, scientific, and credentialing association for 218,000 members and affiliates who are audiologists; speech-language pathologists; speech, language, and hearing scientists; audiology and speech-language pathology support personnel; and students. Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) identify, assess, and treat speech, language, and swallowing disorders. Over 4,200 ASHA members reside in Colorado.¹

ASHA supports the recommendations of the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) in their sunset review to continue the Speech-Language-Pathology Practice Act until September 1, 2033. Retaining certification of SLPs through 2033 will ensure that consumers are protected from harmful practices and that the scope of acceptable practice for the profession is maintained.

Certification through DORA prohibits unqualified individuals from using the "Speech-Language Pathologist" title and provides repercussions for those who do. ASHA's Board of Ethics may reprimand, censure, or suspend ASHA certification and membership, but they may not prohibit an uncertified person from practicing in a state where there is no licensure law and/or regulation.

This law will also ensure that SLPs possess adequate skills and training to assess and treat communication disorders in children and adults. Deregulating SLPs could lead to unqualified individuals providing services that may result in patient experiencing physical injuries, illness, (especially with feeding and swallowing disorders), increased treatment time or exacerbated problems (especially when proper treatment is delayed and critical time periods missed). Untreated consumers may be financially impacted by job loss or the inability to provide basic care for themselves or other members of their family.

ASHA strongly supports the continued regulation of SLPs through DORA certification and appreciates your consideration of ASHA's position on HB 22-1213. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Eileen Crowe, ASHA's director of state association relations, at ecrowe@asha.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy Rich". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judy Rich, EdD, CCC-SLP, BCS-CL
2022 ASHA President

¹ American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2021). *Colorado* [Quick Facts].
<https://www.asha.org/siteassets/uploadedfiles/colorado-state-flyer.pdf>.