



ASHA
American
Speech-Language-Hearing
Association

February 4, 2022

The Honorable Susan Lontine
200 East Colfax Avenue
Colorado State Capitol, Room 307
Denver, CO 80203-1784

RE: Support for Hearing Aids Via Telehealth; SB 1076

Dear Representative Lontine:

On behalf of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, I write in support of SB 1076, which allows hearing aid providers to prescribe, select, and fit hearing instruments and assistive devices, including appropriate technology, in person or through telehealth.

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. Over 4,200 ASHA members reside in Colorado.¹

As the leading national organization for the certification and advancement of audiologists and speech-language pathologists, ASHA supports the development and use of telehealth or “telepractice.” ASHA maintains a collection of professional practice documents, including a position statement that defines telemedicine as “the application of telecommunications technology to deliver professional services at a distance by linking clinician to client or clinician to clinician for assessment, intervention, and/or consultation.”²

ASHA strongly supports the use of telehealth. Research demonstrates the equivalence of telehealth to in-person service delivery for a wide range of diagnostic and treatment procedures for adults and children.³ Studies have shown high levels of patient, clinician, and parent satisfaction supporting telehealth as an effective alternative to the in-person model for delivery of care.⁴ Telehealth expands practitioners’ availability to those in need—regardless of geographic location—saving time and resources for both the provider and the patient.

Despite proven benefits, telehealth remains underutilized within audiology and speech-language pathology due to a lack of clear state laws governing its use or mandating appropriate reimbursement for services delivered. Senate Bill 1076 helps address these barriers by supporting access to hearing aids via telehealth.

Thank you for your consideration of ASHA’s position to support SB 1076. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Eileen Crowe, ASHA’s director of state association relations, at ecrowe@asha.org.

Sincerely,

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>.

² American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (n.d.). *Telepractice*. <https://www.asha.org/Practice-Portal/Professional-Issues/Telepractice/>.

³ Grogan-Johnson, S., Alvares, R., Rowan, L., & Craghead, N. (2010). A pilot study comparing the effectiveness of speech language therapy provided by telemedicine with conventional on-site therapy. *Journal of Telemedicine and Telecare*, *16*, 134–139.

⁴ Ibid.