



ASHA
American
Speech-Language-Hearing
Association

January 28, 2020

The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz
Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Hawaii State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street, Room 208
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: ASHA Support for SB 2557

Dear Senator Dela Cruz:

On behalf of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), I write in support of SB 2557, which provides a \$5,000 yearly bonus for school-based speech-language pathologists (SLPs).

ASHA is the national professional, scientific, and credentialing association for 204,000 members and affiliates who are audiologists; speech-language pathologists; speech, language, and hearing scientists; audiology and speech-language pathology support personnel; and students. Over 500 ASHA members reside in Hawaii.

SLPs are highly skilled professionals who, at minimum, hold a master's degree in communication disorders from an accredited program recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. SLPs complete a challenging education and training program, a supervised clinical fellowship, and must pass a nationally standardized examination. SLPs assess and treat a variety of communication disorders involving speech, language, fluency (e.g., stuttering), voice and resonance problems, cognitive communication disorders (e.g., memory, attention, and problem-solving), and swallowing and associated feeding disorders. Furthermore, SLPs provide services in a variety of practice settings ranging from schools to institutions such as hospitals and rehabilitation centers, early intervention programs, and private practice.

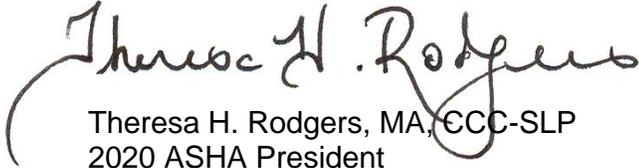
Most SLPs hold ASHA's Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC-SLP). The CCC-SLP is the fundamental standard among major health professions and the most widely recognized symbol of competency for the profession of speech-language pathology. To maintain their CCC, SLPs must accumulate 30 professional development hours every three years. Individuals holding the CCC are also expected to abide by ASHA's Code of Ethics.

Eleven states have passed salary supplement legislation for ASHA-certified SLPs, and approximately 100 local school districts in 24 states have provided local supplement funding. As you know, salary supplements have helped school districts eliminate or mitigate shortages of qualified SLPs, as well as reduce staff turnover. Supplements have also ensured a critical continuity of service for children with speech or language impairments.

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ASHA is pleased to support SB 2557, and thanks you for your leadership. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Eileen Crowe, ASHA's director, state association relations, at ecrowe@asha.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Theresa H. Rodgers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "T" and a long, horizontal flourish at the end.

Theresa H. Rodgers, MA, CCC-SLP
2020 ASHA President