

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 2589

C 310 L 02

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Providing for licensure of audiologists and speech-language pathologists.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Linville, Mulliken, Cody, Skinner, Veloria and Kenney).

House Committee on Health Care
Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care

Background:

The Board of Speech and Hearing credentials speech-language pathologists, audiologists, and hearing instrument fitters/dispensers for practice. It acts as the disciplining authority for unprofessional conduct under the Uniform Disciplinary Act.

Speech-language pathologists and audiologists are certified by the Department of Health for practice. No person may use the titles of "certified speech-language pathologist" or "certified audiologist" without being certified by the department in meeting educational and professional standards established by the Board of Hearing and Speech, and passing an examination.

Speech-language pathology includes the treatment of speech and language disorders that impede oral competencies and the normal process of communication. Audiology relates to hearing disorders that impede the process of human communication, and includes the application of aural rehabilitation and the fitting and dispensing of hearing instruments.

Hearing instrument fitters/dispensers are licensed by the department in meeting training and professional standards established by the board, and persons may not fit and dispense a hearing instrument or represent themselves as engaging in the fitting and dispensing of hearing instruments without being licensed.

Summary:

Speech-language pathologists and audiologists must be licensed by the Department of Health in order to practice and represent themselves respectively in practice. Persons certified as education staff associates by the State Board of Education are exempted unless electing to obtain a license. Every person certified as a speech-language pathologist or audiologist by January 1, 2003, is entitled to be automatically licensed upon application.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 97 1

Senate 47 0 (Senate amended)

House 93 1 (House concurred)

Effective: January 1, 2003