
Health Care Committee

HB 2589

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

Sponsors: Representatives Linville, Mulliken, Cody, Skinner, Veloria and Kenney.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires a license issued by the Department of Health to practice speech-language pathology and audiology in this state.

Hearing Date: 1/31/02

Staff: John Welsh (786-7133).

Background:

The Board of Speech and Hearing credentials speech-language pathologists, audiologists, and hearing instrument fitters/dispensers for practice and 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 of Bill:

Speech-language pathologists and audiologists must be licensed by the department for practice in this state, and no one may use these titles in practice without being licensed. Every person holding a voluntary certificate on the effective date of the act would automatically be issued a license to practice. The requirements for licensure are the same as the current certification requirements.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.