

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 2582

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Health & Long-Term Care, February 18, 2004

**Title:** An act relating to interim permits for speech-language pathologists and audiologists.

**Brief Description:** Providing for interim permits for speech-language pathologists and audiologists.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Linville, Bailey, Cody and Campbell).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 2/18/04 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Deccio, Chair; Winsley, Vice Chair; Brandland, Franklin, Keiser, Parlette and Thibaudeau.

**Staff:** Tanya Karwaki (786-7447)

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

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.

Interim permits may be issued to speech-language pathologists and audiologists who meet academic and practicum requirements for licensure but need to complete post-graduate professional experience and examination requirements. Interim permit holders must practice under the direct supervision of a licensed hearing instrument fitter/dispenser, licensed speech-language pathologist, or licensed audiologist. Direct supervision requires that the supervisor be physically present in the same room with the interim permit holder, observing the nondiagnostic testing, fitting, and dispensing activities at all times.

**Summary of Bill:** The direct supervision requirement for speech-language pathologists and audiologists who practice pursuant to an interim permit is removed. Those practicing under an interim permit must do so under supervision, but not necessarily direct supervision.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** Direct supervision is not an appropriate level of supervision for these professionals because of their level of training. Hospitals and others have been hesitant to hire interim permit holders because of the requirement of direct supervision.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Melissa Johnson, WA Speech and Hearing Assn. (pro).