

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6297

As Passed House:
February 28, 2010

Title: An act relating to certification for speech-language pathology assistants.

Brief Description: Regarding certification of speech-language pathology assistants.

Sponsors: Senator Franklin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 2/18/10, 2/23/10 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/28/10, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Extends alternate certification requirements for Certified Speech-Language Pathology Assistants from July 26, 2009, to July 1, 2010.
- Places Certified Speech-Language Pathology Assistants under the disciplinary authority of the Board of Hearing and Speech.
- Grants the Board of Hearing and Speech the authority to recommend continuing education and continuing competency requirements for Certified Speech-Language Pathology Assistants.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Driscoll, Vice Chair; Ericksen, Ranking Minority Member; Bailey, Campbell, Clibborn, Green, Herrera, Hinkle, Kelley, Moeller, Morrell and Pedersen.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

In 2009 the Legislature created a new credential for Certified Speech-Language Pathology Assistants. Certified Speech-Language Pathology Assistants provide speech-language pathology services under the direction and supervision of Licensed Speech-Language Pathologists or Certified Educational Staff Associates. Supervision of a Certified Speech-Language Pathology Assistants may be direct or indirect; the Board of Hearing and Speech (Board) determines by rule which tasks must be performed under direct supervision and which tasks may be performed under indirect supervision. Speech-Language Pathology Assistants may not perform procedures or tasks that require diagnosis, evaluation, or clinical interpretation.

In order to qualify for certification as a Certified Speech Language Pathology Assistant, a person must either:

- have an associate's degree, or a certificate of proficiency, from an institution of higher education's speech-language pathology assistant program as evidenced by:
 - transcripts showing 45 quarter hours or 30 semester hours of speech-language pathology coursework; and
 - transcripts showing 45 quarter hours or 30 semester hours of general education credit; or
- have a bachelor's degree from an institution of higher education's speech, language, and hearing program.

In lieu of these requirements, an applicant may meet the requirements for certification if, by July 26, 2009, he or she submits a competency checklist to the Board and is employed under the supervision of a speech-language pathologist for at least 600 hours within the last three years as defined by the Board by rule. The Board may require all certified speech-language pathology assistants to comply with continuing competency requirements.

Although the Board is the disciplining authority under the Uniform Disciplinary Act for Licensed Speech Language Pathologists, the disciplining authority for Certified Speech-Language Pathology Assistants is the Department of Health (DOH).

Summary of Bill:

The disciplining authority under the Uniform Disciplinary Act for Certified Speech-Language Pathology Assistants is changed from the DOH to the Board. The Board is authorized to recommend continuing education and continuing competency requirements for Certified Speech-Language Pathology Assistants.

The date by which a person may submit the competency checklist to meet the alternative qualifications for certification as a Certified Speech-Language Pathology Assistant is changed from July 26, 2009, to July 1, 2010.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed, except section 2, relating to listing disciplining authority under the Uniform

Disciplinary Act, which because of prior double amendments, takes effect July 1, 2010, and section 3, relating to listing disciplining authority under the Uniform Disciplinary Act, which because of prior double amendments, takes effect August 1, 2010.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This is a technical change that will allow more time for people to become credentialed. This bill makes the "grandfathering" provisions match up with the rule making period.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Franklin, prime sponsor; and Melissa Johnson, Washington Speech and Hearing Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.