
Oregon Academy of Audiology



**Testimony in Opposition:
SB 124
House Committee on Health Care
April 29, 2021
Bryan Greenaway, Au.D., CH-TM
Legislative Chair, OAA**

Chair Prusak, Vice-Chair Hayden, Vice-Chair Salinas and Members of the House Committee on Health Care:

The Oregon Academy of Audiology, as a representative of the professional audiology community in Oregon, opposes passage of SB 124. The bill would add a certified speech-language pathology assistant (SLPA) to membership of State Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (Board) and create an imbalance on the Board in favor of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

The Oregon Academy of Audiology strongly supports an independent licensing board, free from excessive outside influence. Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) and SLPAs have strong ties through their training and certification to ASHA, one of several national organizations for the speech-language-hearing professions. The current Board makeup, which includes two audiologists and two speech-language pathologists, ensures a balance of perspectives when discussing issues at the state level.

Further, it is the Oregon Academy of Audiology's view that Board membership should be made up of those professions which are licensed through the Board. While SLPAs are overseen by the Board, they are certified rather than licensed. This is due in large part to the nature of the SLP-SLPA relationship. SLPAs work directly under licensed SLPs, billing through them and having their scope of duties defined by them. The types of professional issues which would be handled by the Board would logically be handled through the licensed professionals, the SLPs, who take on professional responsibility for their SLPA charges.

While we welcome discussion of Board make-up, we do not believe now is the time to change the current composition of the Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology. We believe the best solution will be reached through a collaboration of all stakeholders.

We thank you in advance for considering the testimony of the Oregon Academy of Audiology in opposition to SB 124.