

February 18, 2025
Chair Nosse
900 Court St. NE, S-411
Salem, OR 97301
RE: **HB 2357** Relating to Interstate Compact SLP, Audiology and OT
Position: **Support**

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice Chair Javadi and Nelson, and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Teigan Beck, and I'm a speech-language pathologist in Curry County Oregon. I represent the Oregon Speech-Language and Hearing Association as the co-chair of our legislative committee. I am writing to testify in support of House Bill 2357. We do have an amendment currently in drafting that will allow the compact to work with the national organizations, per the language negotiated by the Council of State Governments.

Speech Language Pathologists, who I will be referring to as SLPs during this testimony, provide a valuable therapy that can benefit people of all ages. As an SLP that works in a rural hospital, in a single day I can be working with a patient with Parkinson's to support their voice and speech skills, and then be working with a child with autism helping them learn to communicate with tools such as sign language or a speech generating device. Currently in Curry County there are 23,000 residents and only 5 SLPs.

The reason SLPs support this bill is because it addresses portability and barriers to access for patients of all ages across Oregon. It would improve access to SLP providers for all Oregonians, including the patients that I serve. My position at Curry General Hospital in Gold Beach, Oregon includes SLPs and occupational therapists (OTs), as well as physical therapists who are already part of an interstate compact here in Oregon. This bill would more easily allow us to find qualified SLP and OT therapists to join our therapy team in a timely manner to best serve our inpatient and outpatient clients of diverse ages.

Currently 34 states have already accepted an interstate compact for SLPs. As most of my immediate family lives in Idaho and Idaho is a state that has joined the SLP compact- if a family emergency occurred, this compact would allow me to work there temporarily or continue to serve Oregon residents via teletherapy while away. Best practice for telemedicine is to be licensed in both the state you are in and the state of the patient.

In closing, I serve on the Legislative Committee of the Oregon Speech-Language and Hearing Association, and I have heard from many SLPs and Audiologists that this compact would greatly improve access to these services for all Oregonians. Thank you for considering my comments, I urge you to support HB 2357.

Teigan Beck, MS, SLP
Rehab Manager at Curry Health Network