



February 20, 2025

Chair Nosse
900 Court St. NE, S-411
Salem, OR 97301

RE: **HB 2357** Relating to OT, Speech Language Pathology, Audiology Compact Bill Position:
Support

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

I am writing to you as a licensed Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) and an Oregonian to urge your support of HB 2357. This vital legislation will allow SLPs and Audiologists to better serve all Oregon populations, including rural areas and regions close to Oregon state borders. The legislation will also facilitate timely access as families in Oregon seek certified SLP and Audiology services.

The Audiology Speech Language Pathology Interstate Compact (ASLP-IC) offers several benefits including:

1. Increases choice and access to SLP and Audiology providers

In my county and in the state of Oregon there is a very limited number of SLPs available to serve children and families with services addressing developmental stuttering, cluttering, trauma-based fluency (i.e., military, traumatic brain injury), and acquired neurogenic stuttering (i.e., stroke, aphasia). The legislation would allow families to more easily access specialized SLP services.

2. Improves portability for military spouses

We currently serve adult clients with military backgrounds who present service-related injuries (e.g., traumatic brain injury, concussion) and concomitant complications (i.e., acquired trauma-based stuttering). These adults served in the military and sustained communication challenges requiring them to learn management strategies to use for the rest of their lives. Once successful treatment has started, it is challenging when the family relocates per military decision. The interstate compact would allow the families with military backgrounds to more easily maintain their treatment and the spouses would be able to maintain their occupations when relocating.

3. Improves continuity of care

I work with patients that reside in low-resource regions that are not equipped with the services that are available in a few select sections of our state (e.g., OHSU, University of Oregon). There are patients in other states that want to access our Oregon services at University of Oregon Stuttering and Cluttering Clinic but we must be able to participate in the interstate compact to provide quality and longitudinal care to patients as needed.

4. Facilitates alternate delivery methods (Telehealth)

The legislation would allow SLPs to manage patients across state lines via telehealth services which mitigates the need for expensive travel, housing, and time off work or school for both our patients and their caregivers. For a variety of reasons, families and patients still require telehealth services. Like during the COVID-19 pandemic, families today *still* manage health challenges that make it impossible to commute for in-person service delivery. We learned during the COVID-19 pandemic about the hardships existing for patients and families when transportation to services was not an option. The challenges still exist. By enacting legislation to join the compact, HB 2357 the use of telehealth technology to facilitate increased access to SLP and audiology services in situations like this will be addressed with forward-thinking solutions.

5. Practice of audiology and speech-language pathology occurs in the state where the patient/client is located at the time of the patient/client encounter

Currently there are 34 states and one U.S. territory that have approved this type of legislation and entered the interstate compact for SLPs. I could apply for privileges through the interstate compact that would enable me to provide continuity of care to my Oregon patients/clients if I needed to relocate or spend time in a different state.

HB 2357 offers a clear and organized path to improved patient care across state lines. These impacts will especially impact rural and otherwise underserved patients in our communities.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support of this bill,

Dr. Jessica L. Fanning, CCC-SLP

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