



February 3, 2020

The Honorable Representative Nancy Barto
Arizona House of Representatives
1700 West Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007

RE: House Bill 2225

Dear Representative Barto:

On behalf of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, I write to provide comments on HB 2225, which licenses speech-language pathology assistants (SLPAs).

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) is the national professional, scientific, and credentialing association for 204,000 members and affiliates who are audiologists; speech-language pathologists; speech, language, and hearing scientists; audiology and speech-language pathology support personnel; and students. Over 3,000 ASHA members reside in Arizona.

ASHA appreciates the addition of provisions to HB 2225, which include:

- defining direct supervision to include telecommunication supervision of licensed SLPAs by licensed speech-language pathologists (SLPs);
- waiving certain requirements for SLPAs possessing certification from a nationally recognized speech-language-hearing association;
- adjusting provisions for supervision of SLPAs after 90 days; and
- adding a bachelor's degree as an educational option for SLPAs seeking licensure.

ASHA also supports the addition of two licensed SLPAs to serve on the advisory committee.

As you may be aware, ASHA has established a certification program for SLPAs and audiology assistants, which will become available in the fall of 2020.¹ The program provides for three educational pathway options for SLPAs:

EDUCATION OPTION 1

Completion of a minimum 2-year SLPA program degree from an accredited institution (e.g., associate's degree from a community college, technical training program, certificate program, or bachelor's degree).

EDUCATION OPTION 2

- Bachelor's degree in communication sciences and disorders from an accredited institution
- Complete ASHA's Online SLPA Assistant Education Modules² or equivalent

EDUCATION OPTION 3

- College degree (associate's or bachelor's) from an accredited institution

- Pass coursework from an accredited college institution in the areas below:
 - Introductory or overview course in communication disorders
 - Phonetics
 - Speech sound disorders
 - Language development
 - Language disorders
 - Anatomy and physiology of speech and hearing mechanisms
- Complete ASHA's Online Assistant Education Modules or equivalent³

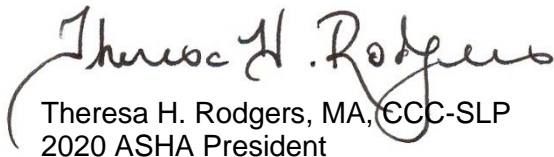
Additional required coursework:

- Completion of a 1-hour ethics course
- Completion of a 1-hour course in universal safety precautions
- Completion of a 1-hour patient confidentiality training course (HIPAA, FERPA, etc.).

Each of the three above options require a conferred associate's or bachelor's degree for ASHA SLPA certification. Therefore, ASHA requests—as future educational options are developed for SLPAs in Arizona—that an associate's degree from an SLPA program (via an accredited institution) be considered. Adding this option to the educational opportunities for SLPAs in Arizona, will broaden employment opportunities and support reimbursement for SLPA services. It would also provide opportunities for increased geographic mobility.

Thank you for considering ASHA's position on the SLPA licensure bill, HB 2225. We look forward to working with you as the SLPA educational options evolve in Arizona. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Eileen Crowe, ASHA's director, state association relations, at ecrowe@asha.org.

Sincerely,



Theresa H. Rodgers, MA, CCC-SLP
2020 ASHA President

cc: Jennifer Casteix

¹ American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Assistants Program. (n.d.). *Speech-Language Pathology Assistants Certification: Eligibility Pathways*. Retrieved from <https://www.ashaassistants.org/pathways-speech-language-pathology-assistant/>.

² Available prior to program launch in late 2020.

³ These three courses must be completed no more than 2 years prior to application. These requirements may also be met as part of an academic course.