

March 12, 2020

Re: Testimony in support of SB 490

From: Kansas Speech-Language-Hearing Association (KSHA)

Dear Chair Baumgardner and members of the Senate Education Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to address SB 490, enacting the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact (ASLP-IC).

The Kansas Speech-Language-Hearing Association (KSHA) is a professional organization comprised of over 1000 Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists across the state of Kansas. KSHA extends our support for SB 490, which facilitates the interstate practice of audiology and speech-language pathology while maintaining public protection.

The State of Kansas has already enacted three such professional interstate compacts, including those for physicians, nurses, and emergency medical personnel. The compact for physicians went into effect in 2016 and includes 29 states, as well as the District of Columbia and Guam. The nursing compact, which now includes 31 states, went into effect in Kansas on July 1, 2019. The interstate compact for emergency medical personnel went into effect in Kansas in 2016.

The ASLP-IC would operate very similarly to those compacts already in place. Adding Kansas to the ASLP-IC benefits both the practitioners and the recipients of speech, language, and hearing services. Once licensed in one's home state, the Interstate Compact would allow practitioners the privilege to practice in-person and through telehealth in ASLP-IC states.

Benefits to the public include improving continuity of care, improving portability for military spouses, improving access to speech-language pathologists and audiologists, facilitating telehealth, and simplifying and speeding up the current process for licensure.

Both Nebraska and Oklahoma have introduced legislation this session enacting the ASLP-IC, which could prove to be quite beneficial for Kansas practitioners living near state lines. Kansas would be forward-thinking in being one of the first ten states to join the ASLP-IC. The ASLP-IC Commission is the governing body of the ASLP-IC and is comprised of two representatives

appointed from each ASLP-IC state licensing board. The Commission is responsible for implementing the Rules and Bylaws of the ASLP-IC. Being one of the first ten states to join the ASLP-IC would ensure that representatives from Kansas would have a role in developing the Rules & Bylaws.

West Virginia recently passed the Compact, and Utah and Wyoming are expected to pass this week. The following states have also introduced the Compact this session and their bills are in various stages of the legislative process: Georgia, Oklahoma, Maryland, Nebraska, Alabama, Kentucky, and Louisiana.

KSHA appreciates this opportunity to discuss the benefits of passing SB 490. Ultimately, joining the Interstate Compact could increase employment opportunities for Kansas practitioners and improve access to speech, language and hearing services for Kansas citizens.

Sincerely,

Susie Ternes, AuD, CCC-A
Executive Director

Julie Gatts, MA, CCC-SLP
Board President