



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

SENATE BILL NO. 137

PRINTERS NO. 1603

PRIME SPONSOR: Gordner

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2013/14	FY 2014/15
Professional Licensure Augmentation Account	\$0	(\$500)

SUMMARY: Amends the Speech-Language and Hearing Licensure Act to update the provisions regulating audiologists and speech-language pathologists, and eliminate the licensure requirement for teachers of the hearing impaired. This legislation would take effect in 60 days.

ANALYSIS: This legislation amends the Speech-Language and Hearing Licensure Act (Act 238 of 1984) to do the following:

- Renames the act the Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists licensure Act.
- Deletes all provisions pertaining to teachers of the hearing impaired.
- Updates the definitions of "Audiologist" and "Speech-language pathologist", and adds definitions for "Neurophysiologic intraoperative monitoring", "Practice of audiology" and "Practice of speech-language pathology."
- Renames the board the State Board of Examiners in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology, and reduces it from 10 to 8 members.
- Allows the board to recognize national professional organizations in speech-language pathology and audiology that have established definitions of the practices, and to review and adopt those definitions through regulation.
- Allows the board to recognize national accrediting agencies which accredit educational programs in speech-language pathology audiology.
- Effective January 1, 2015, increases the education level required to obtain an audiologist license from a master's degree to a doctoral degree.
- Allows the board to issue provisional speech-language pathology and audiology licenses to qualified applicants while awaiting approval of their permanent license application.
- Establishes that audiologists may only perform neurophysiologic intraoperative monitoring (NIOM) upon delegation from and under the overall direction of a physician, and the audiologist must be certified by the board.
- Directs the board to issue certifications to audiologists who are qualified to perform NIOM.

- Allows the board to deny, suspend or revoke a license if a speech-language pathologist or audiologist is unable to practice with reasonable skill and safety because of physical or mental illness or abuse of alcohol or drugs.
- Deletes the requirement that a patient receive a medical examination before an audiologist performs aural rehabilitation, and replaces it with a general requirement that speech-language pathologists and audiologists must refer patients to a physician if they have conditions beyond their scope of practice.
- Provides that a license that has not been renewed for a period of 5 years or more after expiration shall only be renewed after a licensee has assured continued competency in accordance with regulations.
- Allows a licensee who holds a doctoral degree to use the title "doctor" on written materials only if the earned doctoral abbreviation is used.

FISCAL IMPACT: According to the Department of State, this legislation would provide net savings of about \$500 annually. The department expects annual savings of about \$2,000 to occur due to the elimination of two Board member positions and the corresponding reduction in per diems and travel expenses. Revenue loss of \$1,500 per year would result due to the fact that 63 licensed teachers of the hearing impaired would not be required to register and pay the biennial registration fee of \$46.

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House Appropriations Committee (R)

DATE: June 16, 2014

Estimates are calculated using the best information available. Actual costs and revenue impact incurred may vary from estimates.