



OCT 19 2011

Senate of Pennsylvania

DATE: October 18, 2011
TO: All Senators
FROM: Senator John R. Gordner **JRG**
SUBJECT: Proposed Audiology Legislation

In the near future, I plan to introduce legislation that will update the Speech-Language and Hearing Licensure Act.

In 1984, Act 238 (the Speech-Language and Hearing Licensure Act) was passed, licensing speech-language pathologists, audiologists and teachers of the hearing impaired and establishing scopes of practice for them. The Act also created a licensing board to oversee the professions.

This bill is the result of discussions between the professions, the State Board of Examiners in Speech-Language and Hearing (BOE), and other interested parties. It contains appropriate updates in the definition of the scope of practice for audiologists to reflect changes in education and practice over the past 25 years. It also changes the composition of the BOE, updates requirements for licensure to reflect national standards, provides for the proper use of titles associated with practice, and clarifies that the licensed professionals have the appropriate credentials and education to provide their services properly. This bill will only address these updates with regard to audiologists, while removing the references to Teachers of the Hearing Impaired, who have asked to be removed. It does not address the Speech Pathologists' scope at this time.

The bill will advance consumer protection and patient results by ensuring that all those calling themselves audiologists, and all those performing the functions of the profession, are properly licensed by the state. It will allow licensed professionals from other states to come to Pennsylvania to practice by bringing our standards more into conformity with national standards.

The result of all these changes will be better and more accessible hearing care and treatment for our constituents.

If you are interested in co-sponsoring this legislation, please contact my office at 787-8928.