

HCS HB 2138 -- INTERSTATE COMPACT

SPONSOR: Kelley (127)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Professional Registration and Licensing by a vote of 13 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 2138.

This bill allows a person wanting to practice speech-language pathology or audiology to apply for a provisional license allowing him or her to participate in a supervised professional employment period following completion of the academic and practicum requirements of an accredited training program.

The provisional license is for one year but may be extended for an additional 12 months if the purpose is to complete postgraduate clinical experience requirements. An applicant must complete his or her master's or doctoral degree from a program accredited by the Council of Academic Accreditation of the American Speech Language-Hearing Association or other accrediting agency approved by the Board in the area in which licensure is sought within 12 months of the issuance of the provisional license. The applicant must also pass an examination promulgated or approved by the Board of Registration for the Healing Arts, within the Department of Commerce and Insurance, within 12 months of the issuance of the provisional license.

To be eligible for a non-provisional license from the Board of Registration for the Healing Arts, an applicant must show written evidence of completion of the supervised professional employment period. The written evidence must be written by his or her supervisor.

This bill also enters Missouri into a "Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact". An audiologist or speech-language pathologist with an unencumbered license practicing in a member state of the Compact may be eligible to practice in other member states. The individual would be required to follow all laws, rules and regulations in the home or remote state in which he or she is practicing.

The Compact is designed to achieve specified objectives, including, increasing public access to audiology and speech-language pathology services; supporting military spouses; enhancing the exchange of licensure, investigative, and disciplinary information between member states; and allowing a remote state to hold a provider with

a compact privilege in that state accountable to that state's practice standards.

A licensed audiologist or speech-language pathologist providing services in a remote state is subject to that state's regulator authority. A remote state may remove a licensee's compact privilege in the remote state for a specific period of time, impose fines, and/or take any other necessary actions to protect the health and safety of its citizens. Administrative actions will be reported to the individual's home state. A remote state can investigate and report complaints against an individual, but only an individual's home state can revoke his or her license.

The compact will have rules and regulations of the compact created and monitored by a "Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Compact Commission" comprised of delegates from all of the member states.

Any person who holds a valid current speech-language pathologist or audiologist license issued by another state, a branch or unit of the military, a territory of the United States, or the District of Columbia, and who has been licensed for at least one year in such other jurisdiction, may submit an application for a speech-language pathologist or audiologist license in Missouri along with proof of current licensure and proof of licensure for at least one year in the other jurisdiction to the board.

The application must be reviewed within six months and any examination, educational, or experience requirements must be waived by the oversight body. However, the requirements will not be waived if the applicant is currently under investigation by an oversight body outside of Missouri; and has a complaint pending or, is currently under disciplinary action, or has had any license in the relevant occupation or profession revoked, or who has a criminal record that would disqualify him or her for licensure in Missouri.

The Compact shall come into effect on the date on which the Compact statute is enacted into law in the 10th member state.

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that 15 other states already have this and that number is growing. Coming out of the pandemic showed us, we can make this work. This helps rural areas, as well as, metropolitan areas.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Kelley; Allison

McMichael; Ally Noll; Andrea Greenlee Richards; Arnie C. Ac Dienoff; Bailey Hughes; Breanne Mull; Dana Fritz; Dr. Elizabeth Roepke; Emily Buxbaum; Gabrielle Elizabeth Collier; Jacob Gutshall; Jennifer M. Stevenson; Judy Rich; Julia D. Edgar; Klaire Jessie Brumbaugh; Leah Caputo; Leanna Lawrence; Melissa Passe; Michelle Vomund; Phillip W. Hewitt; Sheila Garlock; Taylor Reinsch; Tucker Murry; Jennifer Stevenson; Katherine Elizabeth Goble; Courtney Claxton; Missouri Speech Language Hearing Association; Shannon Locke, MSHA; Kimberly Stewart, MSHA; and the United Women Empowerment.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say this lifts barriers and makes it easier for people to start working in Missouri.

Testifying on the bill was Corianna Baier.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.