

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1633
By: Guillen
Public Health
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Individuals licensed in audiology and speech-language pathology must follow the licensing guidelines of the state in which they reside and practice. Moving to another state can limit or invalidate the license, which is especially a problem for licensees who are family members of those serving in the military and frequently move from state to state. H.B. 1633 seeks to ensure that the licenses of audiologists and speech pathologists licensed in other states are recognized in Texas and to thus increase access to those services by enacting and entering into the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 1633 amends the Occupations Code to enact and enter into the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact with all other applicable jurisdictions to facilitate interstate practice of audiology and speech-language pathology with the goal of improving public access to audiology and speech-language pathology services. The bill sets out the compact's provisions, including with respect to the following:

- individual state participation in the compact;
- the manner in which an audiologist or speech-language pathologist may exercise privileges under the compact, including with respect to practicing telehealth;
- participation in the compact by active duty military personnel and their spouses;
- the authority of member states to take adverse action against an audiologist or speech-language pathologist;
- the establishment of the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Compact Commission as an instrumentality of the member states, the commission's powers and duties, and annual assessments levied on and collected from member states and fees imposed on other parties to fund the commission;
- oversight, dispute resolution, and enforcement of compact provisions by applicable state governments and courts;
- the construction and severability of compact provisions, as well as the binding effect of the compact and other state laws; and
- the process for amending or withdrawing from the compact.

The compact comes into effect on the date on which the compact statute is enacted into law in the 10th member state. The bill designates the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation

as the administrator of the compact and authorizes the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation to adopt rules necessary to implement the bill's provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.