



February 8, 2023

The Honorable Michael Dembrow
900 Court St NE
State Capitol, S-407
Salem, OR 97301-4042

RE: SB 304

Dear Senator Dembrow:

On behalf of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), I write to oppose SB 304, which establishes a Task Force on Occupational Licensing.

ASHA is the national professional, scientific, and credentialing association for 223,000 members and affiliates who are audiologists; speech-language pathologists; speech, language, and hearing scientists; audiology and speech-language pathology support personnel; and students. Audiologists specialize in preventing and assessing hearing and balance disorders as well as providing audiologic treatment, including hearing aids. Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) identify, assess, and treat speech, language, swallowing, and cognitive communication disorders. Over 2,200 ASHA members reside in Oregon.¹

Senate Bill 304 creates unnecessary redundancies and additional budgetary burdens for the state of Oregon as audiologists and SLPs are already governed by the Oregon Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology. This board is needed to protect consumers and practitioners. It has the authority to conduct investigations of practitioners and to issue fines as well as the ability to revoke or suspend licenses. The board has a clearly defined complaint process for consumers and has the appropriate members representing the professions, as well as members of the public, serving on its board.

Thank you for considering ASHA's opposition to SB 304. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Eileen Crowe, ASHA's director, state association relations, at ecrowe@asha.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert M. Augustine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert M. Augustine, PhD, CCC-SLP
2023 ASHA President

¹ American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2022). *Oregon* [Quick Facts]. <https://www.asha.org/siteassets/uploadedfiles/advocacy/state-fliers/oregon-state-flyer.pdf>