

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

1 State of Arkansas
2 94th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2023
4

As Engrossed: S3/2/23

A Bill

SENATE BILL 91

5 By: Senators K. Hammer, J. Boyd, F. Love
6 By: Representatives C. Fite, L. Johnson, Pilkington, Eubanks, D. Garner
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE AUDIOLOGY AND SPEECH-LANGUAGE
10 PATHOLOGY INTERSTATE COMPACT IN ARKANSAS; AND FOR
11 OTHER PURPOSES.
12
13

Subtitle

15 TO ESTABLISH THE AUDIOLOGY AND SPEECH-
16 LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY INTERSTATE COMPACT IN
17 ARKANSAS.
18
19

20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
21

22 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 17, Chapter 100, is amended to add an
23 additional subchapter to read as follows:

24 Subchapter 4 – Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact
25

26 17-100-401. Text of compact.

27 The Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact is
28 enacted into law and entered into by this state with all states legally
29 joining therein and in the form substantially as follows:
30

31 Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact
32

33 SECTION 1: PURPOSE

34 The purpose of this Compact is to facilitate interstate practice of audiology
35 and speech-language pathology with the goal of improving public access to
36 audiology and speech-language pathology services. The practice of audiology



1 and speech-language pathology occurs in the state where the
2 patient/client/student is located at the time of the patient/client/student
3 encounter. The Compact preserves the regulatory authority of states to
4 protect public health and safety through the current system of state
5 licensure. This Compact is designed to achieve the following objectives:

6 1. Increase public access to audiology and speech-language
7 pathology services by providing for the mutual recognition of other member
8 state licenses;

9 2. Enhance the states' ability to protect the public's health and
10 safety;

11 3. Encourage the cooperation of member states in regulating
12 multistate audiology and speech-language pathology practice;

13 4. Support spouses of relocating active duty military personnel;

14 5. Enhance the exchange of licensure, investigative and
15 disciplinary information between member states;

16 6. Allow a remote state to hold a provider of services with a
17 compact privilege in that state accountable to that state's practice
18 standards; and

19 7. Allow for the use of telehealth technology to facilitate
20 increased access to audiology and speech-language pathology services.

21

22 SECTION 2: DEFINITIONS

23 As used in this Compact, and except as otherwise provided, the
24 following definitions shall apply:

25 A. "Active duty military" means full-time duty status in the active
26 uniformed service of the United States, including members of the National
27 Guard and Reserve on active duty orders pursuant to 10 U.S.C. Chapter 1209
28 and 1211.

29 B. "Adverse action" means any administrative, civil, equitable or
30 criminal action permitted by a state's laws which is imposed by a licensing
31 board or other authority against an audiologist or speech-language
32 pathologist, including actions against an individual's license or privilege
33 to practice such as revocation, suspension, probation, monitoring of the
34 licensee, or restriction on the licensee's practice.

35 C. "Alternative program" means a non-disciplinary monitoring process
36 approved by an audiology or speech-language pathology licensing board to

1 address impaired practitioners.

2 D. "Audiologist" means an individual who is licensed by a state to
3 practice audiology.

4 E. "Audiology" means the care and services provided by a licensed
5 audiologist as set forth in the member state's statutes and rules.

6 F. "Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Compact Commission" or
7 "Commission" means the national administrative body whose membership consists
8 of all states that have enacted the Compact.

9 G. "Audiology and speech-language pathology licensing board,"
10 "audiology licensing board," "speech-language pathology licensing board," or
11 "licensing board" means the agency of a state that is responsible for the
12 licensing and regulation of audiologists and/or speech-language pathologists.

13 H. "Compact privilege" means the authorization granted by a remote
14 state to allow a licensee from another member state to practice as an
15 audiologist or speech-language pathologist in the remote state under its laws
16 and rules. The practice of audiology or speech-language pathology occurs in
17 the member state where the patient/client/student is located at the time of
18 the patient/client/student encounter.

19 I. "Current significant investigative information" means investigative
20 information that a licensing board, after an inquiry or investigation that
21 includes notification and an opportunity for the audiologist or speech-
22 language pathologist to respond, if required by state law, has reason to
23 believe is not groundless and, if proved true, would indicate more than a
24 minor infraction.

25 J. "Data system" means a repository of information about licensees,
26 including, but not limited to, continuing education, examination, licensure,
27 investigative, compact privilege and adverse action.

28 K. "Encumbered license" means a license in which an adverse action
29 restricts the practice of audiology or speech-language pathology by the
30 licensee and said adverse action has been reported to the National
31 Practitioners Data Bank (NPDB).

32 L. "Executive Committee" means a group of directors elected or
33 appointed to act on behalf of, and within the powers granted to them by, the
34 Commission.

35 M. "Home state" means the member state that is the licensee's primary
36 state of residence.

1 N. "Impaired practitioner" means individuals whose professional
2 practice is adversely affected by substance abuse, addiction, or other
3 health-related conditions.

4 O. "Licensee" means an individual who currently holds an authorization
5 from the state licensing board to practice as an audiologist or speech-
6 language pathologist.

7 P. "Member state" means a state that has enacted the Compact.

8 Q. "Privilege to practice" means a legal authorization permitting the
9 practice of audiology or speech-language pathology in a remote state.

10 R. "Remote state" means a member state other than the home state where
11 a licensee is exercising or seeking to exercise the compact privilege.

12 S. "Rule" means a regulation, principle or directive promulgated by the
13 Commission that has the force of law.

14 T. "Single-state license" means an audiology or speech-language
15 pathology license issued by a member state that authorizes practice only
16 within the issuing state and does not include a privilege to practice in any
17 other member state.

18 U. "Speech-language pathologist" means an individual who is licensed by
19 a state to practice speech-language pathology.

20 V. "Speech-language pathology means the care and services provided by a
21 licensed speech-language pathologist as set forth in the member state's
22 statutes and rules.

23 W. "State" means any state, commonwealth, district or territory of the
24 United States of America that regulates the practice of audiology and speech-
25 language pathology.

26 X. "State practice laws" means a member state's laws, rules and
27 regulations that govern the practice of audiology or speech-language
28 pathology, define the scope of audiology or speech-language pathology
29 practice, and create the methods and grounds for imposing discipline.

30 Y. "Telehealth" means the application of telecommunication technology
31 to deliver audiology or speech-language pathology services at a distance for
32 assessment, intervention and/or consultation.

33
34 SECTION 3. STATE PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPACT

35 A. A license issued to an audiologist or speech-language pathologist by
36 a home state to a resident in that state shall be recognized by each member

1 state as authorizing an audiologist or speech-language pathologist to
2 practice audiology or speech-language pathology, under a privilege to
3 practice, in each member state.

4 B. A state must implement or utilize procedures for considering the
5 criminal history records of applicants for initial privilege to practice.
6 These procedures shall include the submission of fingerprints or other
7 biometric-based information by applicants for the purpose of obtaining an
8 applicant's criminal history record information from the Federal Bureau of
9 Investigation and the agency responsible for retaining that state's criminal
10 records

11 1. A member state must fully implement a criminal background
12 check requirement, within a time frame established by rule, by receiving the
13 results of the Federal Bureau of Investigation record search on criminal
14 background checks and use the results in making licensure decisions.

15 2. Communication between a member state, the Commission and among
16 member states regarding the verification of eligibility for licensure through
17 the compact shall not include any information received from the Federal
18 Bureau of Investigation relating to a federal criminal records check
19 performed by a member state under Public Law 92-544.

20 C. Upon application for a privilege to practice, the licensing board in
21 the issuing remote state shall ascertain, through the data system, whether
22 the applicant has ever held, or is the holder of, a license issued by any
23 other state, whether there are any encumbrances on any license or privilege
24 to practice held by the applicant, whether any adverse action has been taken
25 against any license or privilege to practice held by the applicant.

26 D. Each member state shall require an applicant to obtain or retain a
27 license in the home state and meet the home state's qualifications for
28 licensure or renewal of licensure, as well as, all other applicable state
29 laws.

30 E. For an audiologist:

31 1. Must meet one of the following educational requirements:

32 a. On or before, Dec. 31, 2007, has graduated with a
33 master's degree or doctorate in audiology, or equivalent degree regardless of
34 degree name, from a program that is accredited by an accrediting agency
35 recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, or its
36 successor, or by the United States Department of Education and operated by a

1 college or university accredited by a regional or national accrediting
2 organization recognized by the board; or

3 b. On or after, Jan. 1, 2008, has graduated with a doctoral
4 degree in audiology, or equivalent degree, regardless of degree name, from a
5 program that is accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the Council
6 for Higher Education Accreditation, or its successor, or by the United States
7 Department of Education and operated by a college or university accredited by
8 a regional or national accrediting organization recognized by the board; or

9 c. Has graduated from an audiology program that is housed
10 in an institution of higher education outside of the United States (a) for
11 which the program and institution have been approved by the authorized
12 accrediting body in the applicable country and (b) the degree program has
13 been verified by an independent credentials review agency to be comparable to
14 a state licensing board-approved program.

15 2. Has completed a supervised clinical practicum experience from
16 an accredited educational institution or its cooperating programs as required
17 by the Commission;

18 3. Has successfully passed a national examination approved by the
19 Commission;

20 4. Holds an active, unencumbered license;

21 5. Has not been convicted or found guilty, and has not entered
22 into an agreed disposition, of a felony related to the practice of audiology,
23 under applicable state or federal criminal law;

24 6. Has a valid United States Social Security or National
25 Practitioner Identification number.

26 F. For a speech-language pathologist:

27 1. Must meet one of the following educational requirements:

28 a. Has graduated with a master's degree from a speech-
29 language pathology program that is accredited by an organization recognized
30 by the United States Department of Education and operated by a college or
31 university accredited by a regional or national accrediting organization
32 recognized by the board; or

33 b. Has graduated from a speech-language pathology program
34 that is housed in an institution of higher education outside of the United
35 States (a) for which the program and institution have been approved by the
36 authorized accrediting body in the applicable country and (b) the degree

1 program has been verified by an independent credentials review agency to be
2 comparable to a state licensing board-approved program.

3 2. Has completed a supervised clinical practicum experience from
4 an educational institution or its cooperating programs as required by the
5 Commission;

6 3. Has completed a supervised postgraduate professional
7 experience as required by the Commission

8 4. Has successfully passed a national examination approved by the
9 Commission;

10 5. Holds an active, unencumbered license;

11 6. Has not been convicted or found guilty, and has not entered
12 into an agreed disposition, of a felony related to the practice of speech-
13 language pathology, under applicable state or federal criminal law;

14 7. Has a valid United States Social Security or National
15 Practitioner Identification number.

16 G. The privilege to practice is derived from the home state license.

17 H. An audiologist or speech-language pathologist practicing in a member
18 state must comply with the state practice laws of the state in which the
19 client is located at the time service is provided. The practice of audiology
20 and speech-language pathology shall include all audiology and speech-language
21 pathology practice as defined by the state practice laws of the member state
22 in which the client is located. The practice of audiology and speech-language
23 pathology in a member state under a privilege to practice shall subject an
24 audiologist or speech-language pathologist to the jurisdiction of the
25 licensing board, the courts and the laws of the member state in which the
26 client is located at the time service is provided.

27 I. Individuals not residing in a member state shall continue to be able
28 to apply for a member state's single-state license as provided under the laws
29 of each member state. However, the single-state license granted to these
30 individuals shall not be recognized as granting the privilege to practice
31 audiology or speech-language pathology in any other member state. Nothing in
32 this compact shall affect the requirements established by a member state for
33 the issuance of a single-state license.

34 J. Member states may charge a fee for granting a compact privilege.

35 K. Member states must comply with the bylaws and rules and regulations
36 of the commission.

1
2 SECTION 4. COMPACT PRIVILEGE

3 A. To exercise the compact privilege under the terms and provisions of
4 the compact, the audiologist or speech-language pathologist shall:

5 1. Hold an active license in the home state;

6 2. Have no encumbrance on any state license;

7 3. Be eligible for a compact privilege in any member state in
8 accordance with Section 3;

9 4. Have not had any adverse action against any license or compact
10 privilege within the previous 2 years from date of application;

11 5. Notify the commission that the licensee is seeking the compact
12 privilege within a remote state(s);

13 6. Pay any applicable fees, including any state fee, for the
14 compact privilege;

15 7. Report to the commission adverse action taken by any non-
16 member state within 30 days from the date the adverse action is taken.

17 B. For the purposes of the compact privilege, an audiologist or speech-
18 language pathologist shall only hold one home state license at a time.

19 C. Except as provided in Section 6, if an audiologist or speech-
20 language pathologist changes primary state of residence by moving between
21 two-member states, the audiologist or speech-language pathologist must apply
22 for licensure in the new home state, and the license issued by the prior home
23 state shall be deactivated in accordance with applicable rules adopted by the
24 commission.

25 D. The audiologist or speech-language pathologist may apply for
26 licensure in advance of a change in primary state of residence.

27 E. A license shall not be issued by the new home state until the
28 audiologist or speech-language pathologist provides satisfactory evidence of
29 a change in primary state of residence to the new home state and satisfies
30 all applicable requirements to obtain a license from the new home state.

31 F. If an audiologist or speech-language pathologist changes primary
32 state of residence by moving from a member state to a non-member state, the
33 license issued by the prior home state shall convert to a single-state
34 license, valid only in the former home state.

35 G. The compact privilege is valid until the expiration date of the home
36 state license. The licensee must comply with the requirements of Section 4A

1 to maintain the compact privilege in the remote state.

2 H. A licensee providing audiology or speech-language pathology services
3 in a remote state under the compact privilege shall function within the laws
4 and regulations of the remote state.

5 I. A licensee providing audiology or speech-language pathology services
6 in a remote state is subject to that state's regulatory authority. A remote
7 state may, in accordance with due process and that state's laws, remove a
8 licensee's compact privilege in the remote state for a specific period of
9 time, impose fines, and/or take any other necessary actions to protect the
10 health and safety of its citizens.

11 J. If a home state license is encumbered, the licensee shall lose the
12 compact privilege in any remote state until the following occur:

13 1. The home state license is no longer encumbered; and

14 2. Two years have elapsed from the date of the adverse action.

15 K. Once an encumbered license in the home state is restored to good
16 standing, the licensee must meet the requirements of Section 4A to obtain a
17 compact privilege in any remote state.

18 L. Once the requirements of Section 4J have been met, the licensee must
19 meet the requirements in Section 4A to obtain a compact privilege in a remote
20 state.

21

22 SECTION 5. COMPACT PRIVILEGE TO PRACTICE TELEHEALTH

23 Member states shall recognize the right of an audiologist or speech-language
24 pathologist, licensed by a home state in accordance with Section 3 and under
25 rules promulgated by the commission, to practice audiology or speech-language
26 pathology in any member state via telehealth under a privilege to practice as
27 provided in the compact and rules promulgated by the commission.

28

29 SECTION 6. ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL OR THEIR SPOUSES

30 Active duty military personnel, or their spouse, shall designate a home state
31 where the individual has a current license in good standing. The individual
32 may retain the home state designation during the period the service member is
33 on active duty. Subsequent to designating a home state, the individual shall
34 only change their home state through application for licensure in the new
35 state.

36

1 SECTION 7. ADVERSE ACTIONS

2 A. In addition to the other powers conferred by state law, a remote
3 state shall have the authority, in accordance with existing state due process
4 law, to:

5 1. Take adverse action against an audiologist's or speech-
6 language pathologist's privilege to practice within that member state.

7 2. Issue subpoenas for both hearings and investigations that
8 require the attendance and testimony of witnesses as well as the production
9 of evidence. Subpoenas issued by a licensing board in a member state for the
10 attendance and testimony of witnesses or the production of evidence from
11 another member state shall be enforced in the latter state by any court of
12 competent jurisdiction, according to the practice and procedure of that court
13 applicable to subpoenas issued in proceedings pending before it. The issuing
14 authority shall pay any witness fees, travel expenses, mileage and other fees
15 required by the service statutes of the state in which the witnesses or
16 evidence are located.

17 3. Only the home state shall have the power to take adverse
18 action against a audiologist's or speech-language pathologist's license
19 issued by the home state.

20 B. For purposes of taking adverse action, the home state shall give the
21 same priority and effect to reported conduct received from a member state as
22 it would if the conduct had occurred within the home state. In so doing, the
23 home state shall apply its own state laws to determine appropriate action.

24 C. The home state shall complete any pending investigations of an
25 audiologist or speech-language pathologist who changes primary state of
26 residence during the course of the investigations. The home state shall also
27 have the authority to take appropriate action(s) and shall promptly report
28 the conclusions of the investigations to the administrator of the data
29 system. The administrator of the coordinated licensure information system
30 shall promptly notify the new home state of any adverse actions.

31 D. If otherwise permitted by state law, the member state may recover
32 from the affected audiologist or speech-language pathologist the costs of
33 investigations and disposition of cases resulting from any adverse action
34 taken against that audiologist or speech-language pathologist.

35 E. The member state may take adverse action based on the factual
36 findings of the remote state, provided that the member state follows the

1 member state's own procedures for taking the adverse action.

2 F. Joint Investigations

3 1. In addition to the authority granted to a member state by its
4 respective audiology or speech-language pathology practice act or other
5 applicable state law, any member state may participate with other member
6 states in joint investigations of licensees.

7 2. Member states shall share any investigative, litigation, or
8 compliance materials in furtherance of any joint or individual investigation
9 initiated under the compact.

10 G. If adverse action is taken by the home state against an
11 audiologist's or speech language pathologist's license, the audiologist's or
12 speech-language pathologist's privilege to practice in all other member
13 states shall be deactivated until all encumbrances have been removed from the
14 state license. All home state disciplinary orders that impose adverse action
15 against an audiologist's or speech language pathologist's license shall
16 include a statement that the audiologist's or speech-language pathologist's
17 privilege to practice is deactivated in all member states during the pendency
18 of the order.

19 H. If a member state takes adverse action, it shall promptly notify the
20 administrator of the data system. The administrator of the data system shall
21 promptly notify the home state of any adverse actions by remote states.

22 I. Nothing in this compact shall override a member state's decision
23 that participation in an alternative program may be used in lieu of adverse
24 action.

25
26 SECTION 8. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AUDIOLOGY AND SPEECH-LANGUAGE
27 PATHOLOGY COMPACT COMMISSION

28 A. The compact member states hereby create and establish a joint public
29 agency known as the audiology and speech-language pathology compact
30 commission:

31 1. The commission is an instrumentality of the compact states.

32 2. Venue is proper and judicial proceedings by or against the
33 commission shall be brought solely and exclusively in a court of competent
34 jurisdiction where the principal office of the commission is located. The
35 commission may waive venue and jurisdictional defenses to the extent it
36 adopts or consents to participate in alternative dispute resolution

1 proceedings.

2 3. Nothing in this compact shall be construed to be a waiver of
3 sovereign immunity.

4 B. Membership, voting and meetings

5 1. Each member state shall have two (2) delegates selected by
6 that member state's licensing board. The delegates shall be current members
7 of the licensing board. One shall be an audiologist and one shall be a
8 speech-language pathologist.

9 2. An additional five (5) delegates, who are either a public
10 member or board administrator from a state licensing board, shall be chosen
11 by the executive committee from a pool of nominees provided by the commission
12 at large.

13 3. Any delegate may be removed or suspended from office as
14 provided by the law of the state from which the delegate is appointed.

15 4. The member state board shall fill any vacancy occurring on the
16 commission, within 90 days.

17 5. Each delegate shall be entitled to one (1) vote with regard to
18 the promulgation of rules and creation of bylaws and shall otherwise have an
19 opportunity to participate in the business and affairs of the commission.

20 6. A delegate shall vote in person or by other means as provided
21 in the bylaws. The bylaws may provide for delegates' participation in
22 meetings by telephone or other means of communication.

23 7. The commission shall meet at least once during each calendar
24 year. Additional meetings shall be held as set forth in the bylaws.

25 C. The commission shall have the following powers and duties:

26 1. Establish the fiscal year of the commission;

27 2. Establish bylaws;

28 3. Establish a Code of Ethics;

29 4. Maintain its financial records in accordance with the bylaws;

30 5. Meet and take actions as are consistent with the provisions of
31 this compact and the bylaws;

32 6. Promulgate uniform rules to facilitate and coordinate
33 implementation and administration of this compact. The rules shall have the
34 force and effect of law and shall be binding in all member states;

35 7. Bring and prosecute legal proceedings or actions in the name
36 of the commission, provided that the standing of any state audiology or

1 speech-language pathology licensing board to sue or be sued under applicable
2 law shall not be affected;

3 8. Purchase and maintain insurance and bonds;

4 9. Borrow, accept, or contract for services of personnel,
5 including, but not limited to, employees of a member state;

6 10. Hire employees, elect or appoint officers, fix compensation,
7 define duties, grant individuals appropriate authority to carry out the
8 purposes of the compact, and to establish the commission's personnel policies
9 and programs relating to conflicts of interest, qualifications of personnel,
10 and other related personnel matters;

11 11. Accept any and all appropriate donations and grants of money,
12 equipment, supplies, materials and services, and to receive, utilize and
13 dispose of the same; provided that at all times the commission shall avoid
14 any appearance of impropriety and/or conflict of interest;

15 12. Lease, purchase, accept appropriate gifts or donations of, or
16 otherwise to own, hold, improve or use, any property, real, personal or
17 mixed; provided that at all times the commission shall avoid any appearance
18 of impropriety;

19 13. Sell convey, mortgage, pledge, lease, exchange, abandon, or
20 otherwise dispose of any property real, personal, or mixed;

21 14. Establish a budget and make expenditures;

22 15. Borrow money;

23 16. Appoint committees, including standing committees composed of
24 members, and other interested persons as may be designated in this compact
25 and the bylaws;

26 17. Provide and receive information from, and cooperate with, law
27 enforcement agencies;

28 18. Establish and elect an executive committee; and

29 19. Perform other functions as may be necessary or appropriate to
30 achieve the purposes of this Compact consistent with the state regulation of
31 audiology and speech-language pathology licensure and practice.

32 D. The Executive committee

33 The executive committee shall have the power to act on behalf of the
34 commission according to the terms of this compact:

35 1. The Executive Committee shall be composed of ten (10) members:

36 a. Seven (7) voting members who are elected by the

1 commission from the current membership of the commission;

2 b. Two (2) ex-officios, consisting of one nonvoting member
3 from a recognized national audiology professional association and one
4 nonvoting member from a recognized national speech-language pathology
5 association; and

6 c. One (1) ex-officio, nonvoting member from the recognized
7 membership organization of the audiology and speech-language pathology
8 licensing boards.

9 E. The ex-officio members shall be selected by their respective
10 organizations.

11 1. The commission may remove any member of the executive
12 committee as provided in bylaws.

13 2. The executive committee shall meet at least annually.

14 3. The executive committee shall have the following duties and
15 responsibilities:

16 a. Recommend to the entire commission changes to the rules
17 or bylaws, changes to this compact legislation, fees paid by compact member
18 states such as annual dues, and any commission compact fee charged to
19 licensees for the compact privilege;

20 b. Ensure compact administration services are appropriately
21 provided, contractual or otherwise;

22 c. Prepare and recommend the budget;

23 d. Maintain financial records on behalf of the commission;

24 e. Monitor compact compliance of member states and provide
25 compliance reports to the commission;

26 f. Establish additional committees as necessary; and

27 g. Other duties as provided in rules or bylaws.

28 4. Meetings of the commission

29 All meetings shall be open to the public, and public notice of meetings
30 shall be given in the same manner as required under the rulemaking provisions
31 in Section 10.

32 5. The commission or the executive committee or other committees
33 of the commission may convene in a closed, non-public meeting if the
34 commission or executive committee or other committees of the commission must
35 discuss:

36 a. Non-compliance of a member state with its obligations

1 under the compact;

2 b. The employment, compensation, discipline or other
3 matters, practices or procedures related to specific employees or other
4 matters related to the commission's internal personnel practices and
5 procedures;

6 c. Current, threatened, or reasonably anticipated
7 litigation;

8 d. Negotiation of contracts for the purchase, lease, or
9 sale of goods, services, or real estate;

10 e. Accusing any person of a crime or formally censuring any
11 person;

12 f. Disclosure of trade secrets or commercial or financial
13 information that is privileged or confidential;

14 g. Disclosure of information of a personal nature where
15 disclosure would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal
16 privacy;

17 h. Disclosure of investigative records compiled for law
18 enforcement purposes;

19 i. Disclosure of information related to any investigative
20 reports prepared by or on behalf of or for use of the commission or other
21 committee charged with responsibility of investigation or determination of
22 compliance issues pursuant to the compact; or

23 j. Matters specifically exempted from disclosure by federal
24 or member state statute.

25 6. If a meeting, or portion of a meeting, is closed pursuant to
26 this provision, the commission's legal counsel or designee shall certify that
27 the meeting may be closed and shall reference each relevant exempting
28 provision.

29 7. The commission shall keep minutes that fully and clearly
30 describe all matters discussed in a meeting and shall provide a full and
31 accurate summary of actions taken, and the reasons therefore, including a
32 description of the views expressed. All documents considered in connection
33 with an action shall be identified in minutes. All minutes and documents of a
34 closed meeting shall remain under seal, subject to release by a majority vote
35 of the commission or order of a court of competent jurisdiction.

36 8. Financing of the commission

1 a. The commission shall pay, or provide for the payment of,
2 the reasonable expenses of its establishment, organization, and ongoing
3 activities.

4 b. The commission may accept any and all appropriate
5 revenue sources, donations, and grants of money, equipment, supplies,
6 materials, and services.

7 c. The commission may levy on and collect an annual
8 assessment from each member state or impose fees on other parties to cover
9 the cost of the operations and activities of the commission and its staff,
10 which must be in a total amount sufficient to cover its annual budget as
11 approved each year for which revenue is not provided by other sources. The
12 aggregate annual assessment amount shall be allocated based upon a formula to
13 be determined by the commission, which shall promulgate a rule binding upon
14 all member states.

15 9. The commission shall not incur obligations of any kind prior
16 to securing the funds adequate to meet the same; nor shall the commission
17 pledge the credit of any of the member states, except by and with the
18 authority of the member state.

19 10. The commission shall keep accurate accounts of all receipts
20 and disbursements. The receipts and disbursements of the commission shall be
21 subject to the audit and accounting procedures established under its bylaws.
22 However, all receipts and disbursements of funds handled by the commission
23 shall be audited yearly by a certified or licensed public accountant, and the
24 report of the audit shall be included in and become part of the annual report
25 of the commission.

26 F. Qualified immunity, defense, and indemnification

27 1. The members, officers, executive director, employees and
28 representatives of the commission shall be immune from suit and liability,
29 either personally or in their official capacity, for any claim for damage to
30 or loss of property or personal injury or other civil liability caused by or
31 arising out of any actual or alleged act, error or omission that occurred, or
32 that the person against whom the claim is made had a reasonable basis for
33 believing occurred within the scope of commission employment, duties or
34 responsibilities; provided that nothing in this paragraph shall be construed
35 to protect any person from suit and/or liability for any damage, loss,
36 injury, or liability caused by the intentional or willful or wanton

1 misconduct of that person.

2 2. The commission shall defend any member, officer, executive
3 director, employee or representative of the commission in any civil action
4 seeking to impose liability arising out of any actual or alleged act, error,
5 or omission that occurred within the scope of commission employment, duties,
6 or responsibilities, or that the person against whom the claim is made had a
7 reasonable basis for believing occurred within the scope of commission
8 employment, duties, or responsibilities; provided that nothing herein shall
9 be construed to prohibit that person from retaining his or her own counsel;
10 and provided further, that the actual or alleged act, error, or omission did
11 not result from that person's intentional or willful or wanton misconduct.

12 3. The commission shall indemnify and hold harmless any member,
13 officer, executive director, employee, or representative of the commission
14 for the amount of any settlement or judgment obtained against that person
15 arising out of any actual or alleged act, error or omission that occurred
16 within the scope of commission employment, duties, or responsibilities, or
17 that person had a reasonable basis for believing occurred within the scope of
18 commission employment, duties, or responsibilities, provided that the actual
19 or alleged act, error, or omission did not result from the intentional or
20 willful or wanton misconduct of that person.

21
22 SECTION 9. DATA SYSTEM

23 A. The commission shall provide for the development, maintenance, and
24 utilization of a coordinated database and reporting system containing
25 licensure, adverse action, and investigative information on all licensed
26 individuals in member states.

27 B. Notwithstanding any other provision of state law to the contrary, a
28 member state shall submit a uniform data set to the data system on all
29 individuals to whom this compact is applicable as required by the rules of
30 the commission, including:

31 1. Identifying information;

32 2. Licensure data;

33 3. Adverse actions against a license or compact privilege;

34 4. Non-confidential information related to alternative program
35 participation;

36 5. Any denial of application for licensure, and the reason(s) for

1 denial; and

2 6. Other information that may facilitate the administration of
3 this compact, as determined by the rules of the commission.

4 C. Investigative information pertaining to a licensee in any member
5 state shall only be available to other member states.

6 D. The commission shall promptly notify all member states of any
7 adverse action taken against a licensee or an individual applying for a
8 license. Adverse action information pertaining to a licensee in any member
9 state shall be available to any other member state.

10 E. Member states contributing information to the data system may
11 designate information that may not be shared with the public without the
12 express permission of the contributing state.

13 F. Any information submitted to the data system that is subsequently
14 required to be expunged by the laws of the member state contributing the
15 information shall be removed from the data system.

16
17 SECTION 10. RULEMAKING

18 A. The commission shall exercise its rulemaking powers pursuant to the
19 criteria set forth in this section and the rules adopted thereunder. Rules
20 and amendments shall become binding as of the date specified in each rule or
21 amendment.

22 B. If a majority of the legislatures of the member states rejects a
23 rule, by enactment of a statute or resolution in the same manner used to
24 adopt the compact within 4 years of the date of adoption of the rule, the
25 rule shall have no further force and effect in any member state.

26 C. Rules or amendments to the rules shall be adopted at a regular or
27 special meeting of the commission.

28 D. Prior to promulgation and adoption of a final rule or rules by the
29 commission, and at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting at which
30 the rule shall be considered and voted upon, the commission shall file a
31 notice of proposed rulemaking:

32 1. On the website of the commission or other publicly accessible
33 platform; and

34 2. On the website of each member state audiology or speech-
35 language pathology licensing board or other publicly accessible platform or
36 the publication in which each state would otherwise publish proposed rules.

1 E. The notice of proposed rulemaking shall include:

2 1. The proposed time, date, and location of the meeting in which
3 the rule shall be considered and voted upon;

4 2. The text of the proposed rule or amendment and the reason for
5 the proposed rule;

6 3. A request for comments on the proposed rule from any
7 interested person; and

8 4. The manner in which interested persons may submit notice to
9 the commission of their intention to attend the public hearing and any
10 written comments.

11 F. Prior to the adoption of a proposed rule, the commission shall allow
12 persons to submit written data, facts, opinions and arguments, which shall be
13 made available to the public.

14 G. The commission shall grant an opportunity for a public hearing
15 before it adopts a rule or amendment if a hearing is requested by:

16 1. At least twenty-five (25) persons;

17 2. A state or federal governmental subdivision or agency; or

18 3. An association having at least twenty-five (25) members.

19 H. If a hearing is held on the proposed rule or amendment, the
20 commission shall publish the place, time, and date of the scheduled public
21 hearing. If the hearing is held via electronic means, the commission shall
22 publish the mechanism for access to the electronic hearing.

23 1. All persons wishing to be heard at the hearing shall notify
24 the executive director of the Commission or other designated member in
25 writing of their desire to appear and testify at the hearing not less than
26 five (5) business days before the scheduled date of the hearing.

27 2. Hearings shall be conducted in a manner providing each person
28 who wishes to comment a fair and reasonable opportunity to comment orally or
29 in writing.

30 3. All hearings shall be recorded. A copy of the recording shall
31 be made available on request.

32 4. Nothing in this section shall be construed as requiring a
33 separate hearing on each rule. Rules may be grouped for the convenience of
34 the commission at hearings required by this section.

35 I. Following the scheduled hearing date, or by the close of business on
36 the scheduled hearing date if the hearing was not held, the commission shall

1 consider all written and oral comments received.

2 J. If no written notice of intent to attend the public hearing by
3 interested parties is received, the commission may proceed with promulgation
4 of the proposed rule without a public hearing.

5 K. The commission shall, by majority vote of all members, take final
6 action on the proposed rule and shall determine the effective date of the
7 rule, if any, based on the rulemaking record and the full text of the rule.

8 L. Upon determination that an emergency exists, the commission may
9 consider and adopt an emergency rule without prior notice, opportunity for
10 comment, or hearing, provided that the usual rulemaking procedures provided
11 in the compact and in this section shall be retroactively applied to the rule
12 as soon as reasonably possible, in no event later than ninety (90) days after
13 the effective date of the rule. For the purposes of this provision, an
14 emergency rule is one that must be adopted immediately in order to:

15 1. Meet an imminent threat to public health, safety, or welfare;

16 2. Prevent a loss of commission or member state funds; or

17 3. Meet a deadline for the promulgation of an administrative rule

18 that is established by federal law or rule.

19 M. The commission or an authorized committee of the commission may
20 direct revisions to a previously adopted rule or amendment for purposes of
21 correcting typographical errors, errors in format, errors in consistency, or
22 grammatical errors. Public notice of any revisions shall be posted on the
23 website of the commission. The revision shall be subject to challenge by any
24 person for a period of thirty (30) days after posting. The revision may be
25 challenged only on grounds that the revision results in a material change to
26 a rule. A challenge shall be made in writing and delivered to the chair of
27 the commission prior to the end of the notice period. If no challenge is
28 made, the revision shall take effect without further action. If the revision
29 is challenged, the revision may not take effect without the approval of the
30 commission.

31
32 SECTION 11. OVERSIGHT, DISPUTE RESOLUTION, AND ENFORCEMENT

33 A. Dispute resolution

34 1. Upon request by a member state, the commission shall attempt
35 to resolve disputes related to the compact that arise among member states and
36 between member and non-member states.

1 2. The commission shall promulgate a rule providing for both
2 mediation and binding dispute resolution for disputes as appropriate.

3 B. Enforcement

4 1. The commission, in the reasonable exercise of its discretion,
5 shall enforce the provisions and rules of this compact.

6 2. By majority vote, the commission may initiate legal action in
7 the United States District Court for the District of Columbia or the federal
8 district where the commission has its principal offices against a member
9 state in default to enforce compliance with the provisions of the compact and
10 its promulgated rules and bylaws. The relief sought may include both
11 injunctive relief and damages. In the event judicial enforcement is
12 necessary, the prevailing member shall be awarded all costs of litigation,
13 including reasonable attorney's fees.

14 3. The remedies herein shall not be the exclusive remedies of the
15 commission. The commission may pursue any other remedies available under
16 federal or state law.

17
18 SECTION 12. DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERSTATE COMMISSION FOR
19 AUDIOLOGY AND SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY PRACTICE AND ASSOCIATED
20 RULES, WITHDRAWAL, AND AMENDMENT

21 A. The compact shall come into effect on the date on which the compact
22 statute is enacted into law in the 10th member state. The provisions, which
23 become effective at that time, shall be limited to the powers granted to the
24 commission relating to assembly and the promulgation of rules. Thereafter,
25 the commission shall meet and exercise rulemaking powers necessary to the
26 implementation and administration of the compact.

27 B. Any state that joins the compact subsequent to the commission's
28 initial adoption of the rules shall be subject to the rules as they exist on
29 the date on which the compact becomes law in that state. Any rule that has
30 been previously adopted by the commission shall have the full force and
31 effect of law on the day the compact becomes law in that state.

32 C. Any member state may withdraw from this compact by enacting a
33 statute repealing the same.

34 1. A member state's withdrawal shall not take effect until six
35 (6) months after enactment of the repealing statute.

36 2. Withdrawal shall not affect the continuing requirement of the

1 withdrawing state's audiology or speech-language pathology licensing board to
2 comply with the investigative and adverse action reporting requirements of
3 this act prior to the effective date of withdrawal.

4 D. Nothing contained in this compact shall be construed to invalidate
5 or prevent any audiology or speech-language pathology licensure agreement or
6 other cooperative arrangement between a member state and a non-member state
7 that does not conflict with the provisions of this compact.

8 E. This compact may be amended by the member states. No amendment to
9 this compact shall become effective and binding upon any member state until
10 it is enacted into the laws of all member states.

11

12 SECTION 13. CONSTRUCTION AND SEVERABILITY

13 This compact shall be liberally construed so as to effectuate the
14 purposes thereof. The provisions of this compact shall be severable and if
15 any phrase, clause, sentence or provision of this compact is declared to be
16 contrary to the constitution of any member state or of the United States or
17 the applicability thereof to any government, agency, person or circumstance
18 is held invalid, the validity of the remainder of this compact and the
19 applicability thereof to any government, agency, person or circumstance shall
20 not be affected thereby. If this compact shall be held contrary to the
21 constitution of any member state, the compact shall remain in full force and
22 effect as to the remaining member states and in full force and effect as to
23 the member state affected as to all severable matters.

24

25 SECTION 14. BINDING EFFECT OF COMPACT AND OTHER LAWS

26 A. Nothing herein prevents the enforcement of any other law of a member
27 state that is not inconsistent with the compact.

28 B. All laws in a member state in conflict with the compact are
29 superseded to the extent of the conflict.

30 C. All lawful actions of the commission, including all rules and bylaws
31 promulgated by the commission, are binding upon the member states.

32 D. All agreements between the commission and the member states are
33 binding in accordance with their terms.

34 E. In the event any provision of the compact exceeds the constitutional
35 limits imposed on the legislature of any member state, the provision shall be
36 ineffective to the extent of the conflict with the constitutional provision

1 in question in that member state.

2
3 17-100-402. Administration of compact – Rules.

4 (a) The Board of Examiners in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology
5 is the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact
6 administrator for this state.

7 (b) The board may adopt rules that are consistent with the Audiology
8 and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact necessary to implement this
9 subchapter.

10 (c) The board is not required to adopt the rules of the Audiology and
11 Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact Commission for those rules to be
12 effective in this state.

13 (d) For the purposes of the member state's ability to reject a rule
14 under Section 10(B) of the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate
15 Compact, Arkansas delegates its authority in this provision to the General
16 Assembly or the Legislative Council.

17
18 *SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 17-100-302(b), concerning the eligibility*
19 *criteria for licensure as a speech-language pathologist or audiologist, is*
20 *amended to read as follows:*

21 *(b) To be eligible for licensure by the board as a speech-language*
22 *pathologist or audiologist, a person shall:*

23 *(1) Possess at least a master's degree in the area of speech-*
24 *language pathology or a master's degree in audiology obtained on or before*
25 *December 30, 2006, or a doctoral degree obtained after January 1, 2007, from*
26 *an educational institution recognized by the board;*

27 *(2) Submit evidence of the completion of the educational,*
28 *clinical experience, and employment requirements, which shall be based on*
29 *appropriate national standards and prescribed by the rules adopted under this*
30 *chapter; ~~and~~*

31 *(3) Apply for a criminal background check and meet the*
32 *qualifications for issuance of a license under § 17-100-309 if he or she*
33 *affirmatively indicates that he or she intends to participate in the*
34 *Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact; and*

35 *(4) Pass an examination approved by the board before the board*
36 *approves a license.*

1
2 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 17-100-305, concerning annual renewals for
3 speech-language pathologists and audiologists, is amended to add an
4 additional subsection to read as follows:

5 (f) If a person affirmatively indicates on his or her renewal that he
6 or she intends to participate in the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology
7 Interstate Compact, then he or she shall apply for a criminal background
8 check and meet the qualifications for issuance of a license under § 17-100-
9 309.

10
11 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code Title 17, Chapter 100, Subchapter 3, is
12 amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

13 17-100-309. Criminal background checks.

14 (a) Each applicant or licensee for a license issued by the Board of
15 Examiners in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology under the Audiology and
16 Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact is required to apply for a state
17 and national criminal background check, to be conducted by the Identification
18 Bureau of the Division of Arkansas State Police and the Federal Bureau of
19 Investigation.

20 (b) The criminal background check shall conform to the applicable
21 federal standards and shall include the taking of fingerprints.

22 (c) The applicant or licensee shall sign a release of information to
23 the board and shall be responsible for the payment of any fee associated with
24 the criminal background check.

25 (d) Upon completion of the criminal background check, the
26 Identification Bureau of the Division of Arkansas State Police shall forward
27 to the board all releasable information obtained concerning the applicant or
28 licensee.

29 (e) For purposes of this section, the board shall follow the licensing
30 restrictions based on criminal records under § 17-3-102.

31 (f)(1) Information received by the board from the Identification
32 Bureau of the Division of Arkansas State Police under this section shall not
33 be available for examination except by the affected applicant or licensee for
34 licensure or his or her authorized representative or the person whose license
35 is subject to revocation or his or her authorized representative.

36 (2) A record, file, or document shall not be removed from the

1 custody of the division.

2 (g) Information made available to the affected applicant or licensee
3 for licensure or the person whose license is subject to revocation shall be
4 information pertaining to that person only.

5 (h) Rights of privilege and confidentiality established in this
6 section do not extend to any document created for purposes other than the
7 criminal background check under the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology
8 Interstate Compact.

9 (i) The board shall adopt the necessary rules to fully implement the
10 provisions of this section.

11
12 /s/K. Hammer
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36