

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6297

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, January 20, 2010

Title: An act relating to certification for speech-language pathology assistants.

Brief Description: Regarding certification of speech-language pathology assistants.

Sponsors: Senator Franklin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/18/10, 1/20/10 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Pflug, Ranking Minority Member; Becker, Marr and Parlette.

Staff: Edith Rice (786-7444)

Background: The Legislature passed ESSB 5601 during the 2009 session. This bill established the requirement that only certified speech-language pathology assistants (SLPAs) can use this designation. Minimum qualification include an associate degree or a bachelor degree or certificate of proficiency from a SLPA program approved by the Board of Hearing and Speech (BHS). As an alternative, within one year of this act's effective date, requirements for certification may be met by submitting a competency checklist to BHS and by being employed under the supervision of a speech language pathologist for a minimum of 600 hours within the last three years.

The Secretary of the Department of Health has authority to discipline SLPAs. An SLPA may only perform tasks delegated by a speech language pathologist and must follow the individualized education program and treatment plan.

Summary of Bill: The Board of Hearing and Speech is given authority to establish standards for certification and discipline of SLPAs.

Applicants for certification as a SLPA can meet the requirements for certification if, within one year of July 1, 2010, the SLPA submits a competency checklist to the Board of Hearing

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and Speech, and is employed under the supervision of a speech-language pathologist for at least 600 hours within the last three years in compliance with board rules.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill just cleans up some errors from last year and will give speech-language hearing pathologist assistants extra time to submit the competency checklist and employment hours.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Melissa Johnson, Washington Speech and Hearing Association.