



Date: May 17, 2023

To: Chair Monroe-Moreno, Vice Chair Backus, and Members of the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means

From: University of Nevada Reno's National Student Speech Language Hearing Association Chapter

Re: AB45

Dear Chair Monroe-Moreno, Vice Chair Backus, and Members of the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means,

My name is Chloe Yocom. I am a student in the Speech Pathology and Audiology program at the University of Nevada Reno (UNR) and President of the University of Nevada Reno's (UNR) National Student Speech Language and Hearing Association (NSSLHA) Chapter.

On behalf of the members of our UNR NSSLHA Chapter, I want to thank each of you for your willingness and time to serve in our Nevada Legislature.

As one of your constituents, and a future Nevada Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP), I am writing to you today on behalf of the members of UNR's NSSLHA Chapter regarding the importance of AB 45 and respectfully request an amendment to AB 45 to include Speech-Language Pathologists in section 4, "Provider of health care".

As a student of the University of Nevada Reno's Speech Pathology and Audiology program, a future Nevada Speech-Language Pathologist, future Nevada provider of healthcare, future Nevada healthcare practitioner, future Nevada allied health care provider, and future part of Nevada's healthcare workforce, having the opportunity to seek and pursue loan forgiveness is of enormous importance to me and my fellow future Nevada Speech-Language Pathologists.

Loan forgiveness for SLPs and Audiologists will help attract and retain these critically needed healthcare professionals in Nevada. There is a critical shortage of SLPs and Audiologists in Nevada, and access to these providers of health care is of utmost importance to the citizens of our state.

Nevada is expected to see a 38% increase in demand for SLPs from 2020 to 2030.

Nevada is 51<sup>st</sup> in the number of SLPs per capita (28.6 per 100,000 citizens). The lowest in the nation, and of the 960 American Speech Language Hearing Association (ASHA) certified SLPs, only 81 provide multilingual services.

Nevada is 50<sup>th</sup> in the number of Audiologists per capita (2.3 per 100,000 residents). One of the lowest in the nation, and of Nevada's 79 ASHA certified Audiologists only 5 provide multilingual services.

Inclusion of Speech-Language Pathologists along with our Audiologist counterparts in AB 45 will provide an incentive for these highly qualified providers of health care to practice in Nevada.

Inclusion of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists in the Student Loan Repayment for Providers of Health Care in Underserved Communities Program will support our underserved communities in attracting and retaining these highly qualified providers of health care in their communities.

Inclusion of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists in AB 45 will help address the workforce shortage of these highly qualified providers of health care in Nevada.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Chloe Yocom

National Student Speech-Language hHearing Association

<https://med.unr.edu/spa/>

<https://www.nsslha.org/>