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# SHAE SORTWELL

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE \* 2<sup>nd</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

**Hearing Testimony**  
**Assembly Committee on Health**  
**May 16, 2023**  
**Assembly Bills 207 & 208**

Chairman Moses and members of the Assembly Committee on Health – Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on ABs 207 and 208, relating to the ratification of the Counseling and Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology compacts.

These two bills stemmed from the Study Committee on Occupational Licenses, of which I co-chaired with Senator Stafsholt. The study committee was created with the goal of finding solutions so current and future license holders can be licensed in a timely manner. We were tasked with finding long-term solutions that would fix the problems plaguing DSPS.

Two policy mechanisms that quicken the process for out-of-state license holders to come to Wisconsin are universal licensure recognition and compacts. Both are sufficient, but the latter, in particular, can be a longer process due to the need for multiple states to sign on before it can take effect. Luckily, both compacts have already reached the minimum number of states. Therefore, if Wisconsin enacted either one, it would be active quickly.

Simply put, AB 207 would allow professional counselors from other compact states to transition to Wisconsin with ease. And AB 208 would do the same for speech-language pathologists and audiologists.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify on this legislation and would gladly answer any questions the committee may have.



# ROB STAFSHOLT

STATE SENATOR • 10<sup>th</sup> SENATE DISTRICT

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P.O. Box 7882  
Madison, WI 53707-7882

TO: Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care  
FROM: Senator Rob Stafsholt  
DATE: May 16, 2023  
SUBJECT: Testimony in Favor of Assembly Bills 207 & 208

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Thank you, Chairman Moses and members of the Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care, for allowing me to submit testimony in favor of Assembly Bill 207 and 208.

Over the last couple of years, I have heard from many frustrated constituents that are dealing with unnecessary delays, confusion and lack of communication while attempting to get an occupational license from the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS). These unnecessary delays cause individuals to postpone starting their careers or stops them from entering the workforce. Wisconsin businesses are struggling to find qualified workers so we need to ensure our licensure process is streamlined and functions efficiently. We cannot afford to fall behind other states in attracting skilled individuals to live and work in our state.

In response, leadership created the Legislative Council Study Committee on Occupational Licenses, and Representative Sortwell and I were appointed as Chair and Vice-Chair. The study committee was created with the goal of finding solutions so current and future license holders can be licensed in a timely manner. In other words, we were tasked with finding long-term solutions that will fix the problems plaguing DSPS.

Through our conversations with licensed professionals, research and policy groups, and the Department of Safety and Professional Services, our study committee focused our bill recommendations on three primary issue areas: data tracking, workload simplification, and reciprocal credentialing.

Assembly bills 207 and 208 fall under the third issue area of reciprocal credentialing. The study committee recommended Assembly Bill 207, which enters Wisconsin into the Counseling Compact, allowing a professional counselor from another compact state to provide professional counseling services here under a "privilege to practice."

The study committee also recommended Assembly Bill 208, which enters Wisconsin into the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact, which grants a similar "privilege to practice" here, for a person from another compact state.

Study committee members broadly supported these bills and recommended them for introduction. We felt like these bills would improve processing and credentialing. Thank you for your support of these bills and feel free to reach out with any questions.



**ASHA**  
American  
Speech-Language-Hearing  
Association

May 12, 2023

Representative Clint Moses  
Chair  
Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care  
Wisconsin State Legislature  
2 East Main Street  
Madison, WI 53703

RE: AB 208

Dear Representative Moses:

On behalf of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, I write to support AB 208, which adopts the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact (ASLP-IC).

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) is the national professional, scientific, and credentialing association for 228,000 members and affiliates who are audiologists; speech-language pathologists; speech, language, and hearing scientists; audiology and speech-language pathology support personnel; and students. Over 4,100 ASHA members reside in Wisconsin.<sup>1</sup>

ASHA members often have difficulty obtaining multiple state licenses to practice due to administrative burdens. These burdens hinder their ability to provide quality services and restrict consumer access in underserved and rural communities. I am pleased to support AB 208, which will address these issues by:

- increasing access to care for patients, clients, and students; and
- facilitating continuity of care when patients, clients, and students relocate or travel to another state, specifically members of the military and their spouses.

Passage of this bill would allow Wisconsin to enjoy the same benefits of the 27 other ASLP-IC member states. We hope the Committee will pass this important legislation to ensure Wisconsin can join the ASLP-IC.

If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Susan Adams, ASHA's director of state legislative and regulatory affairs, at [sadams@asha.org](mailto:sadams@asha.org).

Sincerely,

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

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



## WISCONSIN SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY and AUDIOLOGY ASSOCIATION

563 Carter Court, Suite B | Kimberly, WI 54136 | 920-560-5642 | 920-882-3655 FAX

Date: May 16, 2023

To: Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care

From: Dr. Amy Kroll, Au.D., CCC-A

Re: Support for Assembly Bill 208

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Chairman Moses and committee members thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Assembly Bill 208 which adopts the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact (ASLP-IC).

My name is Dr. Amy Kroll. I am a life-long Wisconsin resident and have been an audiologist for over 25 years. I have provided care to children and adults as an educational audiologist, pediatric audiologist, and private practice audiologist. I am currently employed by the University of Wisconsin - Doctor of Audiology Program, where I prepare future audiologists teaching both in the classroom and clinic. I serve as an At-Large Audiologist for the Wisconsin Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Association (WSHA), and serve on several committees, including my current role chairing the Interstate Compact Committee. I am also the author and publisher of the book, *"I'm the Boss of my Hearing Loss!"*

I am here today representing the Wisconsin Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Association (WSHA). WSHA provides leadership and support for speech-language pathologists and audiologists across Wisconsin through advocacy, education, and public awareness.

WSHA is in strong support of adoption of the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact. We were pleased to see unanimous, bipartisan support for the compact by the Legislative Council Study Committee on Occupational Licenses as well as the Joint Legislative Council.

Wisconsin has already passed several licensure compacts including for physicians, nurses, physical therapists, and occupational therapists. Like other compacts, the ASLP-IC will allow professionals to practice in multiple states without having to obtain additional state licenses. The compact is voluntary for those practicing or desiring to practice in Wisconsin and allows states to retain the ability to regulate practice in their state.

The ASLP-IC is beneficial in many ways ranging from enhancing the workforce to limiting bureaucratic hurdles for healthcare professionals, something we desperately need as healthcare workforce shortages are becoming more dire. Most importantly it will increase access to care for patients, particularly in underserved and rural communities.

For the compact to begin operations, a minimum threshold of ten states must pass legislation to activate the compact. That milestone was reached last year. Passage of AB 208 will pave the way for practitioners in Wisconsin to enjoy the same benefits of the 27 other ASLP-IC member states.

Thank you for your time today and I'm available for any questions.