



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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| BILL NUMBER: HB 2591 | | DATE: 1/14/2026 | |
| COMMITTEE: Professional Registration and Licensing | | | |
| TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES | | | |
| WITNESS NAME | | | |
| INDIVIDUAL: | | | |
| WITNESS NAME: AVERY FRANK | | PHONE NUMBER: | |
| BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: | | TITLE: | |
| ADDRESS: | | | |
| CITY: | | STATE: | ZIP: |
| EMAIL: | ATTENDANCE: Written | | SUBMIT DATE: 1/13/2026 10:31 PM |
| THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo. | | | |

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THIS COMMITTEE

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Avery Frank. I am a senior policy analyst at the Show-Me Institute, a nonprofit, nonpartisan, Missouri-based think tank that advances sensible, well-researched, free-market solutions to state and local policy issues. The ideas presented here are my own and are offered in consideration of making Missouri a better place to work and live.

HB 2591 is a straightforward bill that makes one targeted change to the licensing requirements for aspiring speech-language pathologists. Under current statute, an applicant must present written evidence of completion of a clinical fellowship from supervisors, and the period of employment shall be under the direct supervision of a “person who is licensed by the state of Missouri in the profession in which the applicant seeks to be licensed.” This requirement is rigid and inconsistent with the flexible and more reasonable licensing environment Missouri has been working to cultivate.

If Missouri already trusts licensed professionals from other states to provide services once they move here, it follows that we should also trust licensed professionals from other states to supervise a clinical fellowship. There is no clear public-safety or product-quality justification for restricting supervision solely to Missouri-licensed practitioners.

HB 2591 updates the statute to require that the period of employment be completed under the direct supervision of a licensed speech-language pathologist in good standing, regardless of whether the fellowship occurred inside or outside Missouri. This is a commonsense reform that removes unnecessary red tape and better aligns with our nation-leading licensing reciprocity regime.

With every single occupational license, there are real costs: higher prices for consumers, higher barriers to entry for workers (resulting in fewer providers), reduced innovation, and loss of time and money for licensees. The central question in occupational licensing is whether these costs are justified by clear and demonstrable benefits to public safety or product quality.

In many cases, the evidence suggests they are not. The Mercatus Center at George Mason University conducted a meta-analysis of 19 different studies directly related to licensing and product quality. Only 16 percent of those studies found positive relationships. The weakness of this connection has contributed to nationwide momentum toward reducing unnecessary red tape and reforming existing licensing regimes.

Missouri has been ahead of the curve. In 2020 the state established a universal licensing reciprocity

regime, allowing licensed professionals from other states to have Missouri requirements waived when they relocate here. Last session, Senate Bill 150 strengthened that regime by removing the “compact exception,” a loophole that had allowed certain interstate compacts to supersede our existing licensing regime.

House Bill 2591 represents an opportunity for Missouri to continue leading on occupational licensing reform. There is little reason to believe that applicants who complete a clinical fellowship under a Missouri-licensed supervisor are safer or more proficient practitioners than those supervised by a qualified professional licensed in another state. When a requirement functions as a barrier rather than a safeguard, it should be reconsidered and in many cases discarded. For these reasons, HB 2591 would help make Missouri a better place to work and live.



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| WITNESS NAME | | | |
| REGISTERED LOBBYIST: | | | |
| WITNESS NAME: BRENT HEMPHILL | | PHONE NUMBER: 573-893-4241 | |
| REPRESENTING: MO ASSN SPEECH LANG HEARING ASSN | | TITLE: | |
| ADDRESS: POB 156 | | | |
| CITY: JEFF CITY | | STATE: MO | ZIP: 65101 |
| EMAIL: | ATTENDANCE: | SUBMIT DATE: 1/14/2026 12:00 AM | |
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| WITNESS NAME | | | |
| INDIVIDUAL: | | | |
| WITNESS NAME: SARAH BERRY | | PHONE NUMBER: | |
| BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: | | TITLE: | |
| ADDRESS: | | | |
| CITY: | | STATE: | ZIP: |
| EMAIL: | ATTENDANCE: Written | | SUBMIT DATE: 1/13/2026 8:10 PM |
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I respectfully oppose HB 2591.

This bill removes Missouri's requirement that clinical fellowship supervision for speech-language pathologists be conducted by a Missouri-licensed professional and replaces it with a broader, less accountable standard.

Clinical fellowship supervision is not a formality — it is a critical patient-protection safeguard. Speech-language pathologists routinely work with children, medically vulnerable patients, and individuals with disabilities. Missouri has a responsibility to ensure that supervision during this period is subject to direct state oversight, enforcement, and disciplinary authority.

HB 2591 shifts that responsibility away from the state and toward external accrediting bodies, reducing Missouri's ability to monitor quality, enforce standards, and protect the public. The bill does not demonstrate a compelling workforce emergency that justifies weakening licensure oversight, nor does it provide evidence that current Missouri requirements are failing.

Professional flexibility should not come at the expense of accountability. If supervision standards are to be changed, they should be strengthened — not diluted — and remain firmly under Missouri's regulatory authority.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to oppose HB 2591.