

# HB 1041

SDSLHA does not support HB 1041. Please contact your legislators to address concerns with this legislation and request their “no” vote on it.

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Contact members of the [House Health and Human Services](#) committee.

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Contact members of the [Senate Health and Human Services](#) committee.

## Talking Points

[HB 1041](#) which seeks to combine the licensure board for audiology/hearing aid dispensing with the speech-language pathology licensure board is not needed at this time as the current boards are efficient and effective in regulating the professions. An effort to combine the licensure boards should include a comprehensive update of licensure statutes to reflect current practice. This requires additional time and input from all stakeholders.

1. The 2 existing licensure boards for audiologists, hearing aid dispensers, speech-language pathologists, and speech-language pathology assistants in SD have functioned well since their inception. Both boards meet a minimal number of times each year and have an increasing annual cash balance.
2. The professions of audiology and speech-language pathology are growing increasingly specialized with audiologists addressing issues such as balance and speech-language pathologists evaluating and treating swallowing disorders. A combined board would require board members to address complaints regarding issues that are outside of their scope of practice.
3. Current statutes contain significant differences in licensing structure such as the renewal period for licensure, licensure fees, and professional responsibilities. Additional time is needed for licensure board members and professionals to develop a consistent licensure structure across the four professions.
4. There are aspects of current audiology and speech-language pathology licensure that need to be updated. The bill to combine licensure boards should address these issues to maximize the efficiency of the process. Additional time is needed for all stakeholders to review the current statutes and the proposed bill so that a one-time, cooperative effort to pass a fully up-to-date licensure bill can occur. Passing a combination bill now without addressing these concerns will result in additional efforts to update language in another legislative session
5. Combining the two licensure boards will require board members, professionals, and consumers to allocate time and financial resources to rewrite rules. This is especially challenging as professionals and consumers are taxed with the effect of the COVID pandemic and its effect on clinical services and work/life balance for professionals and consumers.
6. A lengthy licensure law to address the practice of four professions will increase practitioner and consumer confusion as they are required to scroll through a larger number of statutes and rules to find the information that applies to their professional responsibilities and consumer rights.