



## **ISHA Legislative Day February 10, 2025**

### **Bills ISHA Supports**

#### **HB 1572 (hearing aids and speech-language pathologists)**

- Defines over-the-counter hearing aids:
  - Puts Indiana in compliance with an FDA rule established in 2022 that created a new category of hearing aids – over-the-counter hearing aids – in addition to the current category of prescription hearing aids. This ensures the two types of hearing aids have separate and distinct definitions in Indiana Code.
  - Clarifies that only an audiologist or a hearing aid dealer have the authority to “fit” a prescription or over-the-counter hearing aid, ensuring that those performing the fitting are properly trained.
- Adds SLPAs to telehealth:
  - Adds speech-language pathologist assistants (SLPAs) – who were inadvertently left out of the final version of the omnibus telehealth bill during the 2023 legislative session – to the list of professionals who may provide telehealth services.

#### **SB 164 (licensed professional music therapists)**

- Establishes licensure for a professional music therapist and specifies the scope of services a music therapist can provide to ensure that it protects and does not encroach upon the scope of practice for audiologists and speech-language pathologists.
- Protects patients with communication disorders by ensuring that music therapists stay within their scope of services, while also working in tandem with audiologists and speech-language pathologists who are providing their services to the same patients.
- The bill language was agreed upon by both the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA).



## **ISHA Legislative Day February 10, 2025**

### **Bills ISHA Opposes**

#### **HB 1520 (professional licensing)**

- Removes licensure requirements for hearing aid dealers, leaving it ambiguous as to the extent of services hearing aid dealers can provide.
- Particularly with the new category of over-the-counter hearing aids (as established in HB 1572), this puts consumers at risk because it eliminates regulation of – and any minimum competency standards for – hearing aid dealers.

#### **HB 1136 (school corporation reorganization)**

- Dissolves certain public school corporations and transitions them to charter schools, putting special education students and ISHA professionals at risk.
- Students needing hearing and/or speech therapy services can face academic challenges and typically have an individualized education program (IEP) to assist them. Uprooting them from the school system and the special education services they are used to could hurt not only their academic success, but also could hinder the progress they are making in regard to the hearing or speech therapy services they are receiving.
- Puts the jobs of dozens of ISHA professionals in jeopardy, because there is no certainty as to where these employees would land if the public schools are dissolved and how much their job responsibilities would change.