

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **4749**



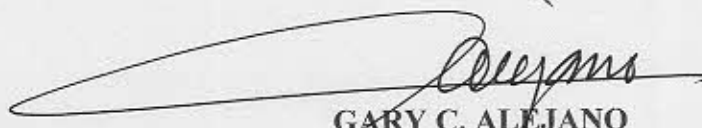
Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**
HON. GARY C. ALEJANO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Speech Language Pathology is a profession devoted to study and help the children and adults who may have difficulty with communication, speech, and language or swallowing disorder diseases.

This bill seeks so promote the development of the profession of speech pathology and increase the competence of speech pathologists by institutionalizing preventive regulatory measures, programs and activities that will foster their continuing professional growth.

In view of the forgoing, the passage of this measure is earnestly sought.


GARY C. ALEJANO
Magdalo Para sa Pilipino Party-List

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Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**
HON. GARY C. ALEJANO

AN ACT
REGULATING THE PRACTICE OF SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY IN
THE PHILIPPINES, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in
Congress assembled:*

ARTICLE I
TITLE AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

SECTION 1. Short Title. This Act shall be known as the "*Speech Language
Pathology Act of 2017*".

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. The State recognizes the important role of speech
language pathologists in nation building and promotes the sustained development of a
reservoir of speech language pathologists whose competence have been determined by
honest and credible licensure examinations whose standards of professional practice and
service are world-class and internationally-recognized, globally competitive through
preventive regulatory measures, programs, and activities that foster their continuing,
professional growth.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. -As used in this Act:

a) "Speech Language Pathology" shall mean an allied health profession devoted
to the evaluation, diagnosis, management and prevention of human
communication disorder.

b) "Speech Language Pathologist" shall mean a person who is registered and
licensed to practice speech language pathology and who holds a valid certificate
of registration/professional license and professional identification card issued by
the Professional Regulation Commission under the provisions of this Act.

c) "Communication Disorder" shall mean impairment in the ability to (1) receive
and/or process symbol systems; (2) represents concepts in systems; (3) transmit

1 and use symbol systems. The impairment may be observed in the disorders of
2 hearing, language and/or speech processes.

3
4 d) "Evaluation" shall mean the global appraisal of the significance and
5 implications of a diagnostic assessment that shall include formal and informal
6 assessment.

7
8 (e) "Diagnosis" shall mean the act of identifying a human communication or
9 swallowing abnormality or disorder by analyzing the symptoms presented. It may
10 also include a study of the origin and development of the symptoms.

11
12 (f) "Language" is any socially and culturally accepted, structured, symbolic
13 system for interpersonal communication composed of sounds, letters, manual sign
14 or other symbols arranged in ordered sequences or strings that express thoughts,
15 intentions, experiences and feelings comprised of orthographic, phonological,
16 syntactical, semantic and pragmatic components.

17
18 (g) "Speech" shall mean the medium of oral communication that employs a
19 linguistic code (language); through this medium, one can express thoughts and
20 feelings and understand those of others who employ the same code.

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23 **ARTICLE II**
24 **THE PROFESSIONAL REGULATORY BOARD OF SPEECH**
25 **PATHOLOGY**
26

27
28 **SEC. 4. *Creation and Composition of the Board.*** Within ninety days after the
29 effectivity of this Act, there shall be created the Professional Regulatory Board of Speech
30 Language Pathology, hereinafter referred to as the Board under the administrative control
31 and supervision of the Professional Regulation Commission, hereinafter referred to as the
32 Commission, to be composed of a Chairperson and two members who shall be appointed
33 by the President of the Philippines from the three (3) recommendees for each vacant
34 position chosen from the five nominees of the integrated and accredited national
35 organization of speech language pathologist.

36
37 **SEC. 5. *Qualifications of the Members of the Board.*** - To be the Chairperson or
38 a member of the Board, one must at the time of higher appointment be:

39
40 a) A natural born citizen of the Philippines and an actual resident thereof for at
41 least five (5) years before his/her appointment;

42
43 b) A duly registered and licensed allied health professional holding a valid
44 certificate of registration/professional license and professional identification card,
45 in active practice for the past five (5) years and a member in good standing of the

1 accredited integrated national organization of speech language pathologists prior
2 to his/her appointment, except if appointed the first Chairperson/member;

3
4 c) Of good moral character and must not have been convicted of any offense
5 involving moral turpitude; and
6

7 d) Must not have pecuniary interest, directly or indirectly, in any school,
8 academy, college, university or institution conferring an academic degree
9 necessary for administration to the practice of speech language pathology or
10 where review classes in preparation for the licensure examination are being
11 offered or conducted, nor shall he/she be a member of the faculty or of the
12 administration thereof at the time of his/her appointment to the Board.
13

14 **SEC. 6. Powers and Functions of the Board.** - The Board shall have the
15 authority to:

- 16
17 a) Promulgate, administer and enforce rules and regulations necessary for
18 carrying out the provisions of this Act;
19
20 b) Administer oaths in connection with the administration of this Act;
21
22 c) Supervise and regulate the registration, licensure and practice of speech
23 language pathology in the Philippines;
24
25 d) Adopt an official seal of the Board;
26
27 e) Maintain a roster of speech language pathologists indicating therein the
28 basic information about the registered professionals;
29
30 f) Study the conditions affecting the practice of speech language pathology in
31 the Philippines and adopt measures for the enhancement of the professional
32 ethical and technical standards therein;
33
34 g) Ensure, in coordination with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED),
35 that all educational institutions offering speech language pathology
36 education comply with the policies, standards and requirements of the
37 course prescribed by the CHED in the areas of curriculum, faculty, library
38 and facilities;
39
40 h) Prescribe and/or adopt a Code of Ethics and Code of Technical Standards
41 for the practice of speech language pathology;
42
43 i) Standards for the practice of speech language pathology; Issue, reinstate,
44 suspend, revoke certificate of registration and/or professional license or
45 cancel special permits for the practice of speech language pathology;

- 1
2 j) Prescribe guidelines and criteria in the Continuing Professional Education
3 (CPE) program for speech language pathologist;
4
5 k) In consultation with the duly accredited organization of speech language
6 pathologist and the duly recognized association of schools conferring a
7 Bachelor's or other entry level degree in Speech Language Pathology,
8 prescribe the area of competence to be included in the computerized
9 licensure examination and their relative weights, determined the syllabi of
10 the subjects, construct the test questions in licensure examination, score and
11 rate examination papers;
12
13 l) Hear or investigate any violations of this Act, its implementing rules and
14 regulations and the Code of Ethics for speech language pathologists, and for
15 this purpose, to issue *subpoena duces tecum* and/or *ad testificandum* to
16 secure the appearance of the witnesses and the production of documents in
17 connection therewith: Provided, that the decision of the Board shall, unless
18 appealed to the Commission, become final and executory after fifteen (15)
19 days from receipt of the judgment or decision;
20 m) Adopt a program for the full computerization of the licensure examination;
21
22 n) Grant registration without examination subject to the approval by the
23 Commission;
24
25 o) Issue and/or cancel special permits to persons admitted to the practice of
26 speech language pathology for a specific duration of time, and certificates of
27 recognition for advanced studies, researches and accomplishments that
28 contribute to the enrichment of the profession; and
29
30 p) Perform such other powers and functions as it may deem necessary to carry
31 out the objectives of this Act.
32

33 The policies, resolutions, rules and regulations issued or promulgated by the
34 Board shall be subject to the review and approval of the Commission.
35
36

37 **SEC. 7. Term of Office.** - The Chairperson and members of the Board shall hold
38 office for three (3) years after appointment or until their successors shall have been
39 appointed and duly qualified; *Provided*, that members of the first Board to be appointed
40 after the approval of this Act shall hold office for the following terms: Chairperson for
41 three (3) years, one member for two (2) years, and the other member for one (1) years:
42 *Provided, further*, that the Chairperson or any member may be re-appointed for another
43 term of three (3) years but in no case shall he/she serve continuously for more than six (6)
44 years. Vacancy in the Board shall be filled for the unexpired term only. Each member of
45 the Board shall automatically be registered as speech language pathologists and issued

1 certificate of registration/professional license and professional identification card and
2 shall take the proper oath of office prior to assumption.
3
4

5 **SEC. 8. *Compensation of the Members of the Professional Regulatory Boards.* -**

6 The chairperson and members of the Board shall receive compensation and allowances
7 comparable to that being received by the Chairpersons and members of existing
8 regulatory boards under the Commission as provided for in the annual General
9 Appropriations Act.
10

11 **SEC. 9. *Suspension and/or Removal of Board Members.* -** Any member of the

12 Board may be suspended or removed from office for gross neglect of duty, incompetence,
13 malpractice, unprofessionalism, immorality, unethical or dishonorable conduct, final
14 judgment of crimes involving moral turpitude, and manipulation or rigging of the
15 licensure examination results, disclosure of secret and confidential information in the
16 examination questions prior to the conduct of the said examination or tampering of
17 grades.
18

19 The administrative proceedings shall be heard by the Commission, whose
20 recommendation shall be submitted to the Office of the President. During the
21 investigation, the respondent shall be placed under preventive suspension by the
22 Commission and another designated to fill the temporary vacancy in the Board.
23
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25 **SEC. 10. *Supervision of the Board, Custodian of its Records, Secretariat and***

26 ***Support Services.* -** The Board shall be under the administrative supervision of the
27 Commission. All records of the Board, including applications for examination, and
28 administrative and other investigative cases conducted by the Board shall be under the
29 custody of the Commission.
30

31 The Commission shall designate the secretary of the Board and shall provide the
32 secretariat and other support services to implement the provision of this Act.
33
34

35 **SEC. 11. *Annual Report.* -** The Board shall submit an annual report to the

36 Commission after the close of each calendar year, giving a detailed account of the
37 proceedings of the Board during the year and recommending measures to be adopted,
38 with the end in view of upgrading and improving the conditions affecting the practice of
39 speech language pathology in the Philippines.

ARTICLE III
LICENSURE EXAMINATION AND REGISTRATION

SEC. 12. *Examination Required.* - All applicants for registration for the practice of speech language pathology shall be required to undergo a licensure examination to be given by the Board in such places and dates as the Commission may designate subject to compliance with the requirements prescribed by the Commission.

SEC. 13. *Qualification for Examination.* - In order to be allowed to take part in the licensure examination, an applicant must, at the time of filing of higher application, establish to the satisfaction of the Board that he/she has met the following qualifications:

- a) A Filipino citizen or a foreign citizen whose state/country has reciprocity agreement with the Philippines in the practice of speech language pathology;
- b) Good moral character;
- d) Has not been convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude; and
- e) A graduate of a Bachelor's degree in speech language pathology from a duly recognized school, college or university in the Philippines or abroad and recognized/accredited by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

SEC. 14. *Scope of Examination.* - The subjects in the licensure examination for Speech Language Pathologists shall cover the following:

- a) Anatomy and physiology of the speech and hearing mechanism
- b) Neurological bases of speech and hearing disorders
- c) Articulation and phonological disorders
- d) Hearing impairment and aural habilitation
- e) Language and cognitive communication disorders
- f) Fluency disorders
- g) Voice disorders
- h) Cleft Lip and Palate and Craniofacial Conditions
- i) Dysphagia
- j) Medical and neurological disorders that may cause communication and swallowing disorders
- k) Normal development and function of speech, language, hearing and swallowing
- l) Principles of assessment and intervention for speech, language, hearing and/or swallowing conditions

1 The Board may recluster, rearrange, modify, add or exclude any subject or change
2 the percentage or weight given to said subjects, as the need arises so as to conform to
3 technological changes.
4

5 **SEC. 15. *Registration Without Examination as Speech Language Pathologist.*** –

6 A person who possesses the pertinent qualifications required for admission in the
7 examination for registration as a speech language pathologist pursuant to the provisions
8 of this Act may be registered without examination, *Provided, That* the applicant files
9 with the Board within six (6) months after the effectivity of the Implementing Rules and
10 Regulations, an application for registration and issuance of a certificate of
11 registration/professional license and professional identification card by submitting
12 credentials showing that the applicant before the effectivity of this Act is a bachelor's
13 degree holder of speech language pathology from a college or university accredited by
14 the CHED. *Provided, further*, that the applicant is a member of the Accredited Integrated
15 Professional Organization of speech language pathologists.
16

17 **SEC. 16. *Ratings in the Examination.*** - To be qualified as having passed the
18 licensure examination for speech language pathologists, a candidate must have obtained a
19 weighted general average of seventy-five (75%), with no grade lower than fifty (50%) in
20 any given subject. A candidate who obtained grade/s below fifty percent (50%) must take
21 the examination in the subject or subjects where he/she obtained a grade below fifty
22 percent (50%) within two (2) years from the date of his/her last examination. The topic or
23 subjects retaken must have each a rating of no less than seventy-five percent (75%) in
24 order to qualify as having passed the examination.
25

26 **SEC. 17. *Report Ratings.*** - The Board shall submit to the Commission the ratings
27 obtained by each candidate within ten (10) calendar days after the examination unless
28 extended for just cause.
29

30 **SEC. 18. *Oath of Speech Language Pathologist.*** - All successful examinees
31 qualified for registration and all qualified applicants for registration without examination
32 shall be required to take an oath of profession before any member of the Board or any
33 authorized officer of the Commission to administer oaths, prior to entering into the
34 practice of speech language pathology in the Philippines.
35

36 **SEC. 19. *Issuance of Certificate of Registration/Professional License and***
37 ***Professional Identification Card.*** - A certificate of registration/professional license and
38 professional identification card shall be issued to all successful examinees and registrants
39 either with or without examination upon compliance with all the legal requirements
40 including payment of fees prescribed by the Commission. The certificate of
41 registration/professional license shall bear the signature of the Chairperson of the
42 Commission and the Chairperson and members of the Board, indicating that the person
43 named therein is entitled to the practice of the profession with all the privileges
44 appurtenant thereto. The said certificate shall remain in full force and effect until
45 withdrawn, suspended or revoked in accordance with this Act.

1 A professional identification card bearing the registration number, date of
2 issuance, expiry date, duly signed by the chairperson of the Commission, shall likewise
3 be issued to every registrant who has paid the prescribed fee.
4

5 **SEC. 20. *Indication of Certificate of Registration/Professional Tax Receipt.*** -
6 The speech language pathologist shall be required to indicate his/her certificate of
7 registration/professional license number and date of issuance, including the professional
8 tax receipt number on the documents he/she signs, uses or issues in connection with the
9 practice of his/her profession.
10

11 **SEC. 21. *Refusal to Register.*** - The Board shall refuse to register and shall not
12 issue a certificate of registration/professional license and professional identification card
13 to any person convicted by a court of competent jurisdiction or a criminal offense
14 involving moral turpitude or guilty of immoral or dishonorable conduct or to any person
15 of unsound mind. In the event of refusal to issue the certificate for any reason, the Board
16 shall give the applicant a written statement setting forth the reason for such action, which
17 statement shall be incorporated in the record of the
18 Board.
19

20 **SEC. 22. *Revocation or Suspension of the Certificate of***
21 ***Registration/Professional License and Professional Identification Card and***
22 ***Cancellation of Special Permit.*** - The Board may, after giving proper notice of hearing to
23 the party concerned, revoke the practitioner's certificate of registration/professional
24 license or suspend him/her from the practice of his/her profession or cancel his/her permit
25 for any of the causes or grounds mentioned in Section 21 of this Act or for any
26 unprofessional or unethical conduct, malpractice, violation of any of the provisions of
27 this Act, its rules and regulations, the Code of Ethics and the Standards for speech
28 language pathologists.
29

30 **SEC. 23. *Reinstatement, Re-issuance or Replacement of Certificate of***
31 ***Registration/Professional License.*** - A person may apply to the Board for reinstatement
32 of a certificate of registration/professional license at any time after two (2) years from the
33 date of revocation of said certificate. The application shall be in writing and shall
34 conform with the requirements as provided by the Board. No certificate/license shall be
35 reinstated unless the Board is satisfied that a good cause exists to warrant such
36 reinstatement.
37

38 **SEC. 24. *Roster of Speech Language Pathologist.*** - The Board shall prepare,
39 update and maintain a roster of speech language pathologist in coordination with the
40 integrated and accredited professional organization, which shall contain the name of each
41 registration and issuance of certificates, and other data which the Board may deem
42 pertinent. The roster shall be open to the public, copies of which shall be mailed to each
43 person listed therein.

SEC. 25. Issuance of Special/Temporary Permit. – Special/Temporary permit may be issued by the Board subject to the approval by the Commission and payment of the fees the latter has prescribed and charged thereof to the following persons:

a) a foreign speech language pathologist called for consultation for a specific purpose which, in the judgment of the Board, is essential for the growth of the profession: Provided, however, that his/her activities shall be limited only to the particular work, for which he/she is being engaged; Provided, further, that he/she is qualified to practice his/her profession in his/her state or country. Provided, finally, that there is no Filipino speech language pathologist qualified for such consultation or specific purpose;

b) a foreign speech language pathologist who is an internationally recognized expert or specialist in any branch of speech language pathology and his/her service is essential for the advancement of speech language pathology in the Philippines; and

c) a foreign speech language pathologist to be engaged as professor, lecturer, or critic in fields essential to speech language pathology education in the Philippines is confined to teaching only.

The permit shall, among other things, include these limitations and conditions: the same shall be valid for a period of not more than one (1) year subject to renewal; the branch or specialty of speech language pathology which permit holder can practice in; and the specific place of practice such as clinic, hospital, center, school/college/university offering the course of speech language pathology. The Board, subject to the approval by the Commission, shall prescribe rules and regulations for the implementation of this particular section.

ARTICLE IV

PRACTICE OF SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

SEC. 26. *Scope of the Practice of Speech Language Pathology.* - The Scope of the Practice of Speech Language Pathology shall embrace, but shall not be limited to the performance, in collaboration with other professionals, families and the community of any of the following:

a) Screen, identify, assess, diagnose, manage and prevent disorders of speech such as, but not limited to articulation, fluency, voice, hearing and language;

b) Screen, identify, assess, diagnose, manage and prevent disorders of oral-pharyngeal functions such as, but not limited to dysphagia and related disorders;

c) Screen, identify, assess, diagnose and manage cognitive communication systems and provide training in their use;

- d) Assess, select and develop augmentative and alternative communication systems and provide training in their use;
- e) Screen hearing acuity for the purpose of speech language evaluation and aural rehabilitation;
- f) Plan, teach and carry out home programs and training for patients and their families;
- g) Plan, conduct and evaluate teaching-learning activities for students of speech language pathology and other related courses; for other health professionals, patients and their families;
- h) Plan, conduct and evaluate researches in pursuit of new knowledge for the growth of speech language pathology in the Philippines;
- i) Provide consultancy to government and non-government organization regarding the field of speech language pathology;
- j) Perform administrative duties in speech language pathology clinics/units in hospitals, schools and other rehabilitation centers; and
- k) Teaching, lecturing and reviewing subjects given in the licensure examination.

SEC. 27. *Prohibition on the Practice of Speech Language Pathology.* - No person shall practice or offer to practice speech language pathology in the Philippines or offer himself/herself as speech language pathologist, or use the title, word, letter figure, or a sign tending to convey the impression that he/she is a speech language pathologist, or advertise or indicate in any manner whatsoever that he/she is qualified to perform the work of a speech language pathologist unless he/she has satisfactorily passed the licensure examination given by the Board, except as otherwise provided in this Act, and is a holder of a valid certificate of registration/professional license and professional identification card or a valid temporary/special permit duly issued to him/her by the Board and the Commission.

SEC. 28. *Prohibited Acts.* - No person shall:

- a) Engage in the practice of speech language pathology by representing himself/herself as a speech language pathologist without a valid certificate of registration/professional license or a valid temporary/special permit granted by the Board pursuant to this Act;
- b) Practice his/her profession during the period of his/her suspension from the practice thereof;

1 c) Allow an unqualified person to advertise or to practice the profession by using
2 his/her certificate of registration/professional license or temporary/special permit;
3 and

4
5 d) Use as his/her own the certificate of registration/professional license or
6 temporary/special permit of another.

7
8 **SEC. 29. Code of Ethics and Code of Technical Standards for Speech**
9 **Language Pathologist.** - The Board shall adopt and promulgate the Code of Ethics and
10 Code of Technical Standards for speech language pathologist prescribed and issued by
11 the Accredited and Integrated Professional Organization (AIPO) of speech language
12 pathologists.

13
14 **SEC. 30. Continuing Professional Development (CPD).** - All speech language
15 pathologists shall abide by the requirements, rules, and regulation on continuing
16 professional education to be promulgated by the PRC Regulatory Board, subject to the
17 approval of the Commission, in coordination with the AIPO for speech language
18 pathology and the representative of duly accredited education institutions. For this
19 purpose, the Board may create a CPD Council to implement the CPD program subject to
20 the guidelines as may be issued by the Commission.

21
22 **SEC. 31. Integration of Speech Language Pathologist.** - The speech language
23 pathology profession shall be integrated into one (1) national professional organization of
24 speech language pathologists which shall be duly registered with the Securities and
25 Exchange Commission (SEC). The Board, subject to approval by the Commission, shall
26 accredit the said organization as the one and only Accredited and Integrated Professional
27 Organization (AIPO) of registered speech language pathologists. All speech language
28 pathologists whose names appear in the Registry Book of Speech Language Pathologists
29 shall *ipso facto* or automatically become members thereof and shall receive all the
30 benefits and privileges appurtenant thereto upon payment of AIPO membership fees and
31 dues.

32 Membership in the Accredited Integrated Professional Organization (AIPO) shall
33 not be a bar to membership in other organizations of speech language pathologists.

34
35 **SEC. 32. Foreign Reciprocity.** - No foreign speech language pathologist shall be
36 given a certificate of registration/professional license and professional identification card
37 or be entitled to any of the privileges under this Act unless the country of which the
38 foreign speech language pathologist is a subject or citizen specifically permits Filipino
39 speech language pathologists to practice within its territorial limits on the same basis as
40 the subjects or citizens of said country or state.

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ARTICLE V
FINAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 33. *Funding Provision.* - The Chairman of the Professional Regulation Commission shall immediately include in the Commission's programs the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Acts and thereafter.

SEC. 34. *Penal Provision.* - Any person who shall violate any of the provisions of this Act or any of its implementing rules and regulations as promulgated by the Board subject to the approval of the Commission shall upon conviction, be punished by a fine of not less than Twenty Thousand Pesos (P20,000.00) nor more than Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000.00) or by imprisonment of not less than two (2) years nor more than five (5) years, or both, at the discretion of the court.

SEC. 35. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - To implement the provisions of this Act, the Board, shall, subject to the approval of the Commission, promulgate the rules and regulations and the Code of Ethics for speech language pathologists within sixty (60) days after the constitution of the first Board.

SEC. 36. *Separability Clause.* - If any section or provision of this Act shall be declared invalid or unconstitutional, such shall not invalidate any other section or provision of this Act.

SEC. 37. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders, issuances or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 38. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) major newspaper of national circulation whichever comes earlier.

Approved,