



Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the Mid-Atlantic States, Inc
2101 East Jefferson Street
Rockville, Maryland 20852

February 4, 2021

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
Health and Government Operations Committee
House Office Building Room 240
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB 288 – Support

Dear Chair Pendergrass and Members of the Committee:

Kaiser Permanente is pleased to support HB 288 – “Audiology and Speech Language Pathology Interstate Compact.”

Kaiser Permanente is the largest private integrated health care delivery system in the United States, delivering health care to over 12 million members in eight states and the District of Columbia.¹ Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States, which operates in Maryland, provides and coordinates complete health care services for approximately 775,000 members. In Maryland, we deliver care to over 450,000 members.

Kaiser Permanente welcomes this legislation as our organization employs Speech and Language Therapists in Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia. While all of our providers are licensed in all three jurisdictions, this bill will make it easier for these professionals to provide care in a variety of locations where and when they are needed. Given the effects of the pandemic and the constant variance of staff available to care for our patients, this allows seamless transition across state lines to practice in areas that are highly concentrated with the need of this facet of care.

We also believe HB 288 will be necessary as we emerge to a post – pandemic state due to the rapidly changing nature of the healthcare industry and the need to address a myriad of diseases. These ailments include but are not limited to hearing loss, neurological disorders, traumatic brain injury, intellectual disabilities, substance abuse, physical impairments such as cleft lip or palate and dysarthria, a motor speech disorder in which the muscles of the mouth, face, or respiratory system may become weak or have difficulty moving. With an aging population, it is essential to establish a sustained means of flexibility for audiologists and speech language pathologists to practice interstate care.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to contact Allison Taylor at Allison.W.Taylor@kp.org or (202) 924-7496 with questions.

¹ Kaiser Permanente comprises Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., the nation’s largest not-for-profit health plan, and its health plan subsidiaries outside California and Hawaii; the not-for-profit Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, which operates 39 hospitals and over 650 other clinical facilities; and the Permanente Medical Groups, self-governed physician group practices that exclusively contract with Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and its health plan subsidiaries to meet the health needs of Kaiser Permanente’s members.

Kaiser Permanente
Comments on HB 288
February 4, 2021

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Allison Taylor".

Allison Taylor
Director of Government Relations
Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Mid-Atlantic States, Inc.