

February 4, 1985

LB 129

SENATOR LABEDZ: Have you all voted? Record.

CLERK: 31 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of the committee amendments. (See page 450 of the Legislative Journal.)

SENATOR LABEDZ: Senator Marsh, on the bill.

SENATOR MARSH: Thank you, Madam Chair. The primary purpose of LB 129 is to continue the existence of the Board of Examiners in audiology and speech pathology by repealing the sunset clause. It is important to note that we need to get this passed this session so the board will not go out of existence. In 1983 the board underwent sunset review. It was the decision of the Performance Review and Audit Committee which conducted the review to continue the board and to change and expand provisions relating to it by introducing LB 840 last year. This bill was held by the Public Health and Welfare Committee and did not reach General File, hence, the bill this year. LB 129 is similar to last year's bill and incorporates some of the amendments that were proposed to it. In addition to continuing the board, Section 13 of the bill provides a statement of legislative intent to the effect that the goal of regulation is to ensure that audiologists and speech pathologists meet minimum standards of proficiency and competency. Sections 14 and 17 will allow audiologists to do vestibular testing of patients when such testing is ordered by a physician. Vestibular testing is done on referral of a physician as a diagnostic tool to identify pathology of hearing and of the balance system. New language permits audiologists to start oral rehabilitation after advising a client that he or she should see a physician. In order to ensure minimum standards, Section 32 continues to require all audiologists and speech pathologists to be licensed by the Department of Health except those practitioners specified in Section 71-1187 which includes audiologists and speech pathologists employed by the federal government and those employed by the State Department of Education which has its own accrediting process. Section 21 seeks to protect the public by requiring 20 clock hours of continuing education every two years. Section 23 to 32 of the bill establishes for the board a definition of communication