

Written Testimony presented by Kansas Speech-Language-Hearing Association to the House Committee on Health and Human Services

January 27, 2022

Chair Hilderbrand and Members of the Committee,

The Kansas Speech-Language-Hearing Association, KSHA, is supportive of SB 343, regarding the updating of terminology for individuals with hearing loss. We also support an amendment updating additional terminology within this section.

KSHA is a professional organization made up of about 1000 speech-language pathologists and audiologists. We appreciate this opportunity to offer testimony supporting SB 343, aimed at replacing the term, “hearing impaired,” with “deaf and hard of hearing” or “individuals with hearing loss.”

After Sen. Kristen O’Shea introduced this bill we reached out to her to thank her, and also to discuss an amendment to SB 343 to update other terminology within the bill regarding speech and language disorders. We fully support the changes that eliminate the outdated term, “hearing impaired.” The World Federation of the Deaf has taken the stance that “hearing impaired” is no longer an acceptable term.

The current version of the bill includes several additional instances of outdated terminology regarding speech and language disorders. While the committee is considering updates regarding hearing loss, it is the perfect time to update the terminology for other communication disorders as well. We have discussed these suggested changes with Sen. O’Shea, and with her permission have provided them to the Revisor’s office per committee conferee guidelines.

The following changes should be made:

Pg. 3, line 24---- Replace *speech and hearing conditions and diseases* with *speech, language, and hearing disorders*

Pg. 11, line 7---- Replace *speech or language impairments* with *speech or language disorders*

Pg. 15, line 2 ---- Replace *speech and hearing conditions and diseases* with *speech, language, and hearing disorders*

Pg. 17, line 37---Replace *speech or language impairments* with *speech or language disorders*

Thank you for considering these changes to SB 343, showing that you value Kansans with communication disorders.

Sincerely,

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References cited:

Disability Language Style Guide, National Center on Disability and Journalism; <https://ncdj.org/style-guide/>