

STATE SENATOR • GILDA Z. JACOBS • 14<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

# Jacobs Press Release

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## **Sen. Jacobs Praises Senate Passage of Speech Pathologist Licensure** *Passage would assure standard qualifications, provide for patient safety*

LANSING- Gilda Z. Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods)

**LANSING**— Sen. Gilda Z. Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods) today praised Senate passage of legislation requiring speech-language pathologists to be licensed by the Michigan Department of Community Health (DCH). The legislation is intended to standardize educational qualifications and further protect the safety of speech pathology patients. Speech-language pathologists are currently licensed in 47 other states.

"Modern treatment of speech and swallowing disorders requires a standard of excellence that this bill will help strengthen," Sen. Jacobs said. "Consumers need to be able to trust the educational qualifications and standards of those who are providing such care."

Sen. Jacobs' bill, SB 493, requires that anyone engaged in the practice of speech-language pathology have a master's degree or a PhD in speech-language pathology and successful completion of the required licensure examination. The bill conforms to national standards for speech-language pathologist recognition.

The bill also requires continuing education for speech pathologists; sets standards for a complaint process and review; and allows the creation of a Michigan Board of Speech-Language pathology that will set minimum standards for the practice of speech pathology. In addition, the bill establishes a \$20 application processing fee and a \$75 annual license fee for an individual licensed or seeking licensure as a speech therapist or speech pathologist.

"This bill will help assure broader access to care for those in need of speech and swallowing disorders, and ultimately contribute to patient safety," Jacobs said. "It's sound legislation."

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*Senator Gilda Jacobs represents the 14<sup>th</sup> Senate District, which includes Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak Township, Southfield and Southfield Township. She is the Minority Vice Chair of the Campaign & Election Oversight and the Families & Human Services committees and a member of the Economic Development & Regulatory Reform; Health Policy; and Finance committees.*

