

Amend CSHB 518 (house committee report) by adding the following appropriately numbered SECTION to the bill and renumbering subsequent SECTIONS of the bill accordingly:

SECTION _____. Chapter 61, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter GG to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER GG. REPAYMENT OF CERTAIN SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST
AND AUDIOLOGIST EDUCATION LOANS

Sec. 61.9801. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Audiologist" means a person licensed as an audiologist under Chapter 401, Occupations Code.

(2) "Communicative disorders program" means a graduate degree program in audiology or speech-language pathology accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology.

(3) "Public school" means a public preschool or primary or secondary school in this state.

(4) "Speech-language pathologist" means a person licensed as a speech-language pathologist under Chapter 401, Occupations Code.

Sec. 61.9802. REPAYMENT ASSISTANCE AUTHORIZED. The board shall provide, in accordance with this subchapter and board rules, assistance in the repayment of student loans for speech-language pathologists and audiologists who apply and qualify for assistance.

Sec. 61.9803. ELIGIBILITY. (a) To be eligible to receive repayment assistance, a speech-language pathologist or an audiologist must:

(1) apply to the board; and

(2) at the time the speech-language pathologist or audiologist applies for the assistance:

(A) have been employed as a speech-language pathologist or as an audiologist, as applicable, for at least one year by, and be currently employed full-time in that capacity by, a public school; or

(B) have been employed as a faculty member of a communicative disorders program at an institution of higher education for at least one year, and be currently employed full-time in that capacity at such an institution.

(b) The board by rule may provide for repayment assistance on a pro rata basis for speech-language pathologists and audiologists employed part-time by a public school or institution of higher education.

Sec. 61.9804. LIMITATION. (a) On qualifying for the assistance, a speech-language pathologist or an audiologist may receive repayment assistance grants for each year of employment, not to exceed five years, by:

(1) a public school; or

(2) a communicative disorders program at an institution of higher education.

(b) The amount of repayment assistance grants that a speech-language pathologist or an audiologist may receive for each year of employment by a public school or a communicative disorders program at an institution of higher education may not exceed 20 percent of the speech-language pathologist's or audiologist's total principal amount of student loans.

(c) The total amount of repayment assistance grants received by a speech-language pathologist or an audiologist under this subchapter may not exceed \$30,000 for an eligible recipient who holds a master's degree but not a doctoral degree, or \$45,000 for an eligible recipient who holds a doctoral degree.

Sec. 61.9805. ELIGIBLE LOANS. (a) The board may provide repayment assistance for the repayment of any student loan for education at an institution of higher education, including loans for undergraduate education, received by a speech-language pathologist or an audiologist through any lender.

(b) The board may not provide repayment assistance for a student loan that is in default at the time of the speech-language pathologist's or audiologist's application.

(c) Each state fiscal biennium, the board shall attempt to provide repayment assistance in amounts sufficient to use all the money appropriated to the board for that biennium for the purpose of providing repayment assistance under this subchapter.

Sec. 61.9806. REPAYMENT. (a) The board shall deliver any repayment made under this subchapter in a lump sum payable to the lender and the speech-language pathologist or audiologist, in

accordance with any applicable federal law.

(b) A repayment made under this subchapter may be applied only to the principal amount of the loan.

Sec. 61.9807. ADVISORY COMMITTEES. The board may appoint advisory committees to assist the board in administering this subchapter.

Sec. 61.9808. ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS. The board may accept gifts, grants, and donations for the purposes of this subchapter.

Sec. 61.9809. RULES. (a) The board shall adopt rules necessary for the administration of this subchapter.

(b) The board shall distribute a copy of the rules adopted under this section and pertinent information regarding this subchapter to:

- (1) each institution of higher education;
- (2) any appropriate state agency; and
- (3) any appropriate professional association.