

RESTORE GRADUATE STUDENT LOAN BENEFITS

ACTION

Urge your members of Congress to support and cosponsor the POST GRAD Act [S. TBD / H.R. 2526], to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965, which would reinstate the authority of the U.S. Secretary of Education to make Federal Direct Stafford Loans to graduate and professional students.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW?

For many years, both undergraduate and graduate students were eligible for the Federal Direct Subsidized Loan Program with the goal of making all levels of post-secondary education accessible to students with a financial need. In 2012, changes in the Budget Control Act (P.L. 112-25) eliminated eligibility for graduate students to participate. This change has increased the cost of borrowing significantly and put graduate study out of reach for many students with a financial need, especially underrepresented groups.

WHAT YOU NEED TO SAY?

- Audiologists require a doctoral degree in order to be licensed in most states.
- Speech-language pathologists require a master's degree to be licensed in most states.
- Eliminating eligibility for graduate students to obtain federal loans has significantly increased the cost of borrowing, and resulted in a negative impact on students who wish to pursue a graduate degree in a variety of fields, including audiology and speech-language pathology.

Projections for Audiologists

- According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the national employment rate of audiologists is expected to grow much faster than average through the year 2022.
- An additional 4,300 audiologists will be needed to fill the demand between 2012 and 2022—a 34% increase in job openings.

Projections for Speech-Language Pathologists

- According to the (BLS), the national employment rate of speech-language pathologists (SLPs) is expected to grow faster than average through the year 2022.
- An additional 26,000 SLPs will be needed to fill the demand between 2012 and 2022—a 19% increase in job openings.
- In occupational employment projections for 2012 to 2022, speech-language pathology ranked 13th out of the 20 large-growth occupations that typically require a master's, doctoral, or professional degree for entry.

ASHA CONTACT:

Neil Snyder, Director of Federal Advocacy
202-624-7750 • nsnyder@asha.org
takeaction.asha.org