

12/12/2024-REPORTED OUT TO THE FLOOR

BILL NO. 35-0419

Thirty-Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

December 10, 2024

An Act amending title 27 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 1A by establishing the Virgin Islands Board of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology

PROPOSED BY: Senator Diane T. Capehart

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

SECTION 1. Title 27 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 1A is amended by adding section 168q that reads:

“§ 168q. Board established

(a) The Virgin Islands Board of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (“Board”) is established within the Virgin Islands Department of Health. The Board shall regulate the practice of audiology and speech-language pathology.

(b) The Board is composed of five members appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Legislature, who are citizens of the United States and residents of the Virgin Islands. Two members shall reside on St. Croix, two members shall reside on St. Thomas, and one member shall reside on St. John.

(c) Two members must be licensed to practice as a speech-language pathologist, two members must be licensed to practice as an audiologist, and one member must be licensed to practice as a speech-language pathology assistant or an audiology assistant. All members must

1 hold licenses in the respective practices for at least five years before the date of appointment
2 and must be 21 years of age or older.

3 (d) Each member is appointed for a term of three years or until a successor is
4 appointed, except that the terms of the first appointees may be for shorter periods to permit a
5 staggering of terms. Any person appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration
6 of the term for which his predecessor was appointed, shall be appointed only for the remainder
7 of such term. Each member shall serve until the member's successor is appointed by the
8 Governor and confirmed by the Legislature.

9 (e) The Commission shall annually elect one of its members to serve as Chairperson.

10 (f) Three members constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business of the Board.

11 (g) The Governor may remove a member of the board for neglect of duty, malfeasance,
12 incompetence, misconduct, or conviction of a felony.

13 (h) Board members shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for travel
14 expenses in the performance of official Board business as provided under Title 3 Virgin Islands
15 Code, chapter 5, subchapter I, section 65.”

16 **BILL SUMMARY**

17 This bill amends title 27, chapter 1A by adding section 168q to establish the Virgin
18 Islands Board of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (“Board”). The bill establishes
19 the composition of the Board, the term limits and qualifications of its members, and matters
20 related thereto.

21 **BR24-1211B/December 9, 2024/GC**

22 **DRAFTER’S NOTE**

23 This bill is a companion bill to BR24-1211A. Both bill requests should go through the
24 pro-forma process together and be heard in committee together.