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August 23, 2013

Members of the Committee on
Licensure and Consumer Protection
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
RE: HB 1561

Dear Honorable Representatives,

Instrumental evaluations for voice and swallowing disorders using laryngoscopic instrumentation are standard procedures performed by qualified Speech Language Pathologists nationwide and throughout the world. These assessments provide several benefits to the citizens of Pennsylvania. First they generate crucial diagnostic information that enables physicians to more efficiently identify impairments in need of further medical and surgical diagnostic evaluation. They also provide timely information that reduces the likelihood that adverse events such as pneumonia, choking and malnutrition, will produce harmful outcomes to our patients, and they enable the Speech Language Pathologist to treat swallowing and voice disorders without the guesswork that they are now required to employ without instrumentation.

Our colleagues in adjacent states and countries around the world have long since accepted and embraced the importance and utility of laryngoscopic evaluation by qualified Speech Language Pathologists and I support efforts to explicitly enable qualified Pennsylvania Speech Language Pathologists to perform specific laryngoscopic procedures for non-medical purposes of identifying, treating and managing voice and swallowing disorders.

Sincerely,

Matthew B. Straka, M.D.