

HB 2994 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Action Date: 03/07/23

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 11-0-0-0

Yeas: 11 - Bowman, Conrad, Dexter, Diehl, Goodwin, Javadi, Morgan, Nelson, Nosse, Pham H, Tran

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 2/15, 3/7

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires coordinated care organizations and Oregon Health Authority to provide medical assistance recipients 18 years of age and younger cochlear implants, hearing aids, and hearing assistive technology systems in specified circumstances. Requires health benefit plans to reimburse for cost of fitting of cochlear implants or other assistive listening devices. Requires health benefit plan reimbursement of costs of assistive listening devices and services prescribed by a physician even if over-the-counter items and services are available without prescription. Clarifies notice requirements for adverse determinations related to claims for coverage for assistive listening devices and services. Defines "assistive listening device." Requires health benefit plan to cover ear molds as medically necessary. Requires health benefit plans to cover hearing device components, including but not limited to bone-conducting sound processor headbands and prosthetic device parts. Requires health benefit plan to cover cost of necessary hearing aid repair and replacement parts if not covered by warranty, regardless of age of user. Prohibits making coverage subject to deductible. Extends cochlear implant and assistive listening device coverage requirements to coverage provided by Public Employees' Benefit Board (PEBB), and Oregon Educators Benefit Board (OEBB).

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Benefits of cochlear implants vs. hearing aids
- Estimated premium impact of similar mandate in Washington
- House Bill 4104 (2018)
- Number of children in Oregon suffering from hearing loss

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

According to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD), approximately 15 percent of American adults aged 18 and over report some trouble hearing, including over 28 million adults who could benefit from using hearing aids. In 2007, the Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill 491 requiring health insurers to cover bilateral cochlear implants whenever the policy provides for reimbursement of a cochlear implant. In 2018, House Bill 4104 updated this coverage requirement to require health benefit plan coverage of medically appropriate bilateral cochlear implants, including coverage of implant programming. That measure also required coverage of ear molds, replacement batteries, and other hearing aid supplies and services.

House Bill 2994 A modifies the health insurance coverage requirements for hearing-related items and services and extends coverage requirements to the Public Employees' Benefit Board (PEBB), Oregon Educators Benefit Board

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(OEBB), and medical assistance recipients 18 years of age and younger.