

Submitter: Heather Durham

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2994

I am a Pediatric Audiologist at Doernbecher Children's Hospital/Oregon Health and Science University and I fully support this bill.

We serve children from all over the state and see and feel the hardship that a diagnosis of hearing loss can have on a family. Families of children who require amplification are frequently placed in financial hardship or without sound due to restrictions and limitations of payment/coverage of hearing aids and hearing services by their insurance companies. Children with hearing loss in both ears should be provided two hearing devices. Children with old hearing aids should have access to new hearing aids so they can use their devices with technology at school and at home. Children should be able to get new earmolds so their hearing aids will fit and work appropriately. Devices that directly affect a child's development should not be limited to whether or not a deductible has been met.

Clinics and providers serving our Oregon children are also experiencing financial hardship due to limitations and restrictions of reimbursement and payment. Providers should be paid for their time. Reimbursement for devices, batteries, accessories should at least reflect current market prices. The poor reimbursement and lack of payment for services has resulted in a shortage of clinics serving children. This has subsequently led to limited and inadequate access of hearing services.

Children deserve better.

Sincerely,

Heather Durham Au.D.
Pediatric Audiologist