

Submitter: J R

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2994

At 3 months of age, my daughter received her first set of hearing aids. It had already been an emotional journey—discovering she was born with hearing loss, learning how to read an audiogram, understanding the impact it would have on how she navigates the world—and, on top of it all, was the realization of the financial toll. Now, at 16 months of age, each stage of the process has been ridden with hidden fees. The equipment itself is covered by insurance, but what about routine maintenance and fit checks (of which there are many during the first months of life)? As soon as my daughter discovered her thumbs, pulling out her hearing aids became an automatic reflex and ripped, torn, broken ear molds an all too common occurrence. Should a parent have to choose between arguing about a medical necessity with an insurance company or their child going without? Given 80% of a child's brain is developed by age 3, every day, every hour, every minute of exposure to sound and verbal language counts. Thankfully, universal hearing screenings are required at birth, identifying children at the earliest possible age and, in turn, anticipating the needs of families by connecting them with resources and professionals. But what good are these efforts if audiology services are not fully covered by insurance? Please, don't let corporate greed get in the way of what Oregon children not only need, but deserve. Support HB 2994.