

Dear Co-Chair Steiner, Co-Chair Sanchez and Members of the Joint Committee On Ways and Means,

I am writing today to share my strong support of HB 2994A, a bill that will ensure deaf and hard-of-hearing kids across the state get the critical healthcare services they need to thrive.

As a parent of a deaf child and as an educator, I believe this bill is crucially important for Oregon's children.

Insurance companies are finding ways to deny families this essential coverage for hearing aids. This is shameful. As my husband and I are meeting more people in the deaf and hearing loss community we have already met some families who do not have this coverage. For one of them, it means not being able to afford hearing aids for their 10 year old son who has hearing loss.

Have you been in a 4th or 5th grade classroom lately? Can you try imagining it for me please? Now, can you imagine trying to learn while not having full access to hearing?

Access to hearing healthcare services is a fundamental medical right and education right for our kids.

Please take action and pass HB 2994 to help ensure all Oregon children have this right.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Dillon