



February 20, 2018

Senate Committee on Health Care
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Monnes Anderson and Members of the Committee

RE: HB 4104

Children First for Oregon represents the interests of Oregon's 880,000 children and believes that together, with communities and leaders across the state, we can build a state where all children thrive. HB 4104 would change the current hearing aid mandate for private insurance providers, thereby removing current barriers for children with hearing loss and allow them to gain access to services and technology they need for school and life.

Children who do not receive treatment for hearing loss cost the education system an additional \$420K and are faced with overall lifetime costs of \$1 million in special education, lost wages, and health complications.

In addition to adding currently missing important components for care, under HB 4104, insurance companies will assign a case manager to each family when a child is diagnosed with permanent hearing loss, as well as contract with a requisite number of pediatric audiologists. Having a case manager available to describe hearing benefits to the family and help them navigate the insurance system will help children with permanent hearing loss thrive.

Children First asks for your support of HB 4104.

Sincerely,

James Barta, Strategic Director