

Submitter: Sarah Atwill

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2994

Hello House Members,

As a resident of Beaverton, Oregon, I am writing today in support of Oregon children and families and the fundamental importance of early access to hearing care.

Listening, access to language and developing spoken communication is a vital component to the necessary skills needed to thrive and grow in society. Accessing hearing services and the critical equipment and ongoing care needed for managing aided assistance for children with hearing loss is vital.

It would be an honor as an Oregon voter to see HB 2994 supported and help the state of Oregon take a further lead across the United States. HB 2994 will show that Oregonians value this care and attention to our youngest generations and their providers.

I believe it is essential that the House Members on this committee set a precedent by passing this bill and showing support for these essential services and children by holding for-profit insurance companies and healthcare systems accountable for investing in their members and communities. As a staff member of a non-profit office, soundSTART Hearing + Speech Clinic, that was opened to make access for pediatric audiology services more available and higher quality, I know firsthand the importance and value these services have for Oregon's children and their caregivers. Commercial insurance plans should not be able to design policies and practices around coverage that limits children's access to the care, services and equipment they need or by drastically reducing the rates of reimbursements so that providers and clinics cannot afford to provide the necessary coverage without taking a hit.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony!