

Submitter: Robbie Henderson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2994

Children that are deaf and hard of hearing are dependent on hearing aids to access sound, and this is critically important for their education. As kids grow, so do their ears. As a result, ear molds for their hearing aids do not fit and they lose access to sound. If families are not able to get new ear molds as their child grows, the child is not able to access the sounds of speech. In the classroom they fall behind and struggle academically, socially, and emotionally. Hard of hearing students already struggle and not allowing them access to ear molds compounds their struggles.

Children grow at different rates at various times of childhood. Just like shoes, children outgrow their ear molds. Sometimes they can go 6-12 months with the same ear mold. At other times, they grow so fast they need new ear molds every three months. We can't expect a child to use hearing aids with an ear mold that does not fit for a year. They will not have access to quality sound, the hearing aid could fall out and get lost, or the child simply will not be able to wear their hearing aids. As a parent of a hard of hearing student, education is already hard enough but not being able to hear in the classroom because they don't have an ear mold that fits is unacceptable. Every child deserves the chance to hear all of the sounds of speech in the classroom. Without properly functioning hearing aids that includes properly fitting ear molds, hard of hearing students will not make the adequate yearly progress we expect for all of our students.

As a parent of a hard of hearing student and as an educator, we need all of our students to have access to sound!