

February 15, 2023.

Good morning,

Today I write to you as a proud mom of a hard-of-hearing boy who is thriving partly because he received hearing aid and educational support. He attends the International School of Portland, a language-immersion school based on inquiry learning.

Every child deserves the best shot at life and education. For many, this includes the right to hear. Sadly, there are significant holes in Oregon's law related to insurance coverage for deaf and hard of hearing children.

HB 4104 was passed in 2018 and attempted to address these issues by requiring the coverage of hearing aids, cochlear implants, and certain assistive listening devices for kids.

Unfortunately, in implementation over the last four years, children and families have struggled to get insurance coverage for these critical services and devices.

HB 2994 clarifies and expands the coverage of services and devices, as approved by the legislature in 2018, to ensure all our children have a chance to thrive.

Children not being able to afford hearing aids and related audiology services is unacceptable. We should not be limiting the ability to hear to only those who can afford it.

More than 25 states have already passed such legislation. Passage of this bill is both morally and economically wise for all.

Sincerely,
Mariana Phipps, M.S.