

April 19, 2021

Dear Senate Health and Welfare Committee:

As Otolaryngologists and Audiologists, we are writing in support of Section 12 of S. 132. We see both adults and children each day with hearing loss that can be improved with the use of hearing aids. Although we can diagnose hearing loss and recommend hearing aids, our patients are often very surprised and dismayed to learn that they are not covered by insurance. At a minimum cost of several thousand dollars, these are often out of reach for many patients and their families. Children who are properly aided are able to develop speech and language, learn more readily in school without fatigue, and are less at risk of repeating grades in school. Adults with aided hearing are able to communicate with their coworkers, family and friends, avoid social isolation that hearing loss often brings, and have better quality of life scores than adults with hearing loss that is unaided.

We have innumerable stories of patients and their families who struggled to purchase hearing aids. We unfortunately each know too many patients who continue to go without because they must choose between hearing and being able to communicate in their families, workplaces and community and providing simple necessities such as winter heat. We realize that multiple personal stories have been submitted already, so will not lengthen our letter of support with redundancy.

Sincerely,



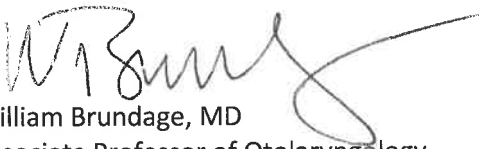
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