



June 5, 2023

Dear Chairman Lampton and Members of the Insurance Committee:

I am writing to express my full support for House Bill 152, Madaline's Law, regarding hearing aid insurance coverage for children. As an educational audiologist in Northeast Ohio, I have the privilege of working daily with children with hearing loss, most of whom communicate and navigate the world through listening and spoken language. Approximately 90% of children born with hearing loss in the United States are born into families without hearing loss. Because of this, children with hearing loss require technology, like hearing aids, to access everyday life.

I work in several rural counties with families who have had to decide between updating their students failing hearing technology or paying rent/mortgage because best practice recommends that hearing aids are updated approximately every 3-5 years due to wear and technology updates. With hearing aids averaging approximately \$2,500 per ear, it is no surprise that many of my students have technology over 6+ years with excessive battery drain and intermittent/poor sound quality. These students are being forced to learn and socialize with an already disabled auditory system. Imagine having to use a motorized wheelchair to navigate the world with a flat tire on one side.

I encourage you to pass this important legislation in order to ensure Ohio families do not have to decide whether their child's basic right to access with the world effectively is worth falling behind on other essential living expenses.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

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