

Good afternoon Chairman Hackett, Vice Chair Lang, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the Senate Insurance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today about House Bill 152.

My name is Tess and I'm a senior at Hilliard Davidson High School and I am taking classes at Ohio State University. I've also worn hearing aids every day since I was diagnosed at 22 months old.

Hearing aids are a vital part of my life, from singing in the car to playing clarinet in concert and marching band. Without these important medical devices, I would struggle much more and would be unable to reach my goals.

I am very lucky to have parents who can afford my hearing aids, however many parents cannot. Without this legislation, many children will go without hearing aids for vital parts of their life.

When I was in elementary school, I earned the "best listener" award. While ironic, this would not have been possible without my hearing aids. When I was in middle school, I wouldn't have been able to hear if I was playing the right note on my clarinet if I wasn't wearing my hearing aids. In high school, I used my hearing aids in class to be able to understand Romeo and Julliet and understand French pronunciation. During my year-long Rotary study abroad in Belgium, my hearing aids became more crucial than ever as I struggled to understand French, make friends, and go to school in a new language.

When I look back at my life, my hearing aids have been with me every part of the way. Without these devices, I doubt that I would have been able to learn and explore during my childhood as much as I did.

Other Ohio kids with hearing loss deserve this chance like I had, and hearing aids are vital for that. Parents shouldn't need to save for months or years to provide their children with these devices. Please support House Bill 152.