

Hearing Aid Insurance Legislation

We support hearing aid insurance legislation

~AARP
~AG–Bell, Washington State Chapter
~Community Service Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
~Eastern Washington Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
~Governor’s Committee on Disability Issues & Employment
~Hearing, Speech, & Deafness Center
~King County Advisory Council on Aging and Disability Services
~Listen and Talk School
~Listen for Life Center at Virginia Mason
~Northwest Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
~The Rotary Club of Clover Park–Lakewood
~Senior Lobby
~Southeast Washington Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
~Southwest Washington Center for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing
~Tacoma Area Coalition of Individuals with Disabilities
~Trellis Medical
~Washington Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
~Washington Hearing Society
~Washington State Association of the Deaf
~Washington Protection and Advocacy System
~Hearing Loss Association of Washington
~Washington Speech & Hearing Association
~Washington State Grange

Did you know...?

- Hearing impairment is the number one birth defect in the US. [1]
- Hearing loss is the 3rd most prevalent chronic condition in the older population. [2]
- About 10% of the population in Washington State has a hearing loss, and only about 20% of this number uses a hearing aid.
- Many of the remaining 80% are deterred because of the financial barrier.
- The average price of a pair of hearing aids is about \$4000 and rising.
- Insurance typically does not cover hearing aids, or small amounts, while Medicare provides no coverage.
- Children with only a mild uncorrected hearing loss, even in only one ear, have been found to miss 25% to 50% of classroom speech. They are more likely to be held back at least one grade, compared to children with normal hearing. A child who is not identified or treated early for hearing loss costs taxpayers an additional \$420,000 for special education – and approximately \$1 million over a lifetime. [3]

[1] Deafness Research Foundation: <http://www.drf.org/> [2] National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders: <http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/> [3] Deafness Research Foundation: <http://www.drf.org/>

Untreated hearing loss results in:

- Educational dropouts
- Employment barriers
- Family discord
- Increased dependency on the welfare system
- Isolation
- Physical and mental health problems

The Washington State HAIL Coalition is a grass roots movement made up of individuals and organizations representing or serving people with hearing loss. Our goal is the adoption of a law that will alleviate the enormous financial burden hearing impaired people of all ages are forced to endure due to inadequate, if any, insurance coverage for hearing aids.

For more information:

contact chair, Penny Allen at Pallen@hearingloss-wa.org or 360-871-0997 or see <http://www.hearingloss-wa.org/hail.htm>