



Hearing Loss Association of America
Michigan State Association
PO Box 4808, Troy, MI 48099
www.hearingloss-mi.org
info@hearingloss-mi.org
A non-profit 501(c)3 tax exempt organization

October 18, 2023

RE: Support HB 4944 and HB 4963

I am writing on behalf of the Hearing Loss Association of America – Michigan State Association (HLAA-MI). We are asking you to **SUPPORT** HB 4944 and HB 4963. Every year approximately 400 children are born in Michigan who either have hearing loss or will acquire a hearing disability by school age. The use of hearing aids and early intervention services allow the majority of deaf and hard of hearing children to reach the same speech and language milestones as their peers by the age of 5.

HB 4944 and HB 4963 are cost effective because the early provision of hearing aids, audiology, and speech and language pathology services would allow the vast majority of children to hear and develop good speech and language. These early services will help many deaf and hard of hearing children enter kindergarten without the need for special education. This in turn would help public schools save money and resources.

Currently, 28 states have statutes that require insurance coverage of hearing aids for children. We strongly believe that it is time for Michigan to join the majority of states and pass its own law that requires health insurance policies to cover hearing aids for children as well as hearing related services and devices.

Again, we ask you to **SUPPORT** House Bills 4944 and 4963.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Jeffrey Astrein'.

Jeffrey Astrein
President of HLAA-MI
jeffrey.astrein@hearingloss-mi.org
248-514-0070 (Cell) – call or text