

Health benefit plan coverage for hearing aids for children with hearing loss.

Let me tell you about my child and family ...

- Insurance coverage of hearing aids is greatly needed.
- 1 pair of hearing aids cost between \$3,000 and \$6,000. ***My child's hearing aids cost \$ _____.***
- Just like glasses, hearing aids need to be replaced or changed over time.

This benefit would have helped my family and other families that have children with a hearing loss ...

- State when your General Assembly mandated newborn hearing screening for all babies with full implementation.
- Approximately 3 children per 1,000 births were diagnosed with permanent hearing loss.
- Research has shown that children diagnosed with hearing loss and provided amplification within the first 6 months of life will develop the language foundation necessary for literacy and academic success by the time they start kindergarten.
- Hearing aids are critical to the language development of children with hearing loss whose parents have chosen listening and spoken language for them.
- Research has shown at least 40 percent of children with a hearing loss are needing insurance coverage for hearing aids.
- 16 other states-- Arkansas, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Maryland, Colorado, New Mexico, Minnesota, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Missouri, New Jersey, Maine, Delaware, Oregon, Wisconsin--have passed legislation requiring insurance coverage for hearing aids for children (range 5 to 39 cents per member per health plan). Rhode Island covers all age ranges and Wisconsin also includes cochlear implants.
- Estimated insurance premium increase per insured TN citizen in minimal (i.e., pennies).

This benefit would ultimately save our our community dollars ...

- The average educational cost for a child with hearing loss who is not provided the necessary intervention, including hearing technology, is estimated to require special education services of \$417,000 to \$500,000 during the educational years, and an additional \$500,000 in public support after leaving the educational setting.