Date: March 29, 2019

To:

From: MCHAB

Regarding: SB200

*DRAFT*

The Maternal Child Health Advisory Board (MCHAB) supports SB200. Requiring insurance coverage for certain services, devices and supplies related to hearing aids for individuals experiencing hearing loss, as well as cochlear implants and auditory brainstem implants for children with profound deafness are important treatment modalities to consider that can have major impacts on their health and well-being.

Hearing loss affects approximately 1.7 out of every 1,000 infants, making it one of the most common birth defects.¹ The rate of documented confirmed hearing loss in Nevada was 1.36 infants per thousand in 2016.² Of the 25,850 children sampled in the Nevada Kindergarten Health Survey (NKHS) 2016-2017, 0.3% are hard of hearing. Estimates of school-age children with hearing loss is difficult to quantify due to reporting challenges, however may be as high as 9-10 per thousand.³

Children with hearing loss face significant challenges, including but not limited to speech and language development, with far-reaching consequences that can affect learning, reading and social-emotional development. These challenges can have lifelong educational and employment consequences. Early diagnosis and treatment can significantly decrease or even eliminate these disparities. Comprehensive multidisciplinary assessments to determine the most effective treatment is essential to obtain the most benefit. Ensuring equal access to appropriate hearing aid devices or cochlear and auditory brainstem implants for children when determined to be medically necessary is essential. Consistent insurance coverage for these services will provide opportunities to enhance quality of life for those who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Thank you for your consideration.

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1. [http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/hearingloss/data.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/hearingloss/data.html)
2. [http://dpbh.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/dpbhnvgov/content/Programs/EHDI/dta/Publications/EHDI%20Governor’s%20Report%202018%20draft%207.3.18%20-%20Current(1).pdf](http://dpbh.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/dpbhnvgov/content/Programs/EHDI/dta/Publications/EHDI%20Governor’s%20Report%202018%20draft%207.3.18%20-%20Current(1).pdf)
3. White, K. (October, 2010). Twenty years of early hearing detection and intervention (EHDI): Where we’ve been and what we’ve learned. ASHA Audiology Virtual Conference.