

ONE HUNDRED SIXTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION - 2019
COMMITTEE STATEMENT
LB15

Hearing Date: Monday March 04, 2019
Committee On: Banking, Commerce and Insurance
Introducer: Blood
One Liner: Adopt the Children of Nebraska Hearing Aid Act

Roll Call Vote - Final Committee Action:
Advanced to General File with amendment(s)

Vote Results:

Aye:	7	Senators Gragert, Howard, Kolterman, Lindstrom, McCollister, Quick, Williams
Nay:		
Absent:		
Present Not Voting:	1	Senator La Grone

Oral Testimony:

Proponents:

Seantor Carol Blood
Cindy Johnson
Dr Peter Seiler
John Wyvill
Josh Sevier
Jeremy Fitzpatrick
Quin Fitzpatrick
Jasper Payne
Laryssa Payne
Lynn Johnson-Romero
Katie Brennan
Edison McDonald
Lesley Turek
Ryan Sewell
Amber McLaughlin
Danielle Savington
Nathan Schmitz

Representing:

Introducer
Children's Hospital and Medical Center
NE Association of the Deaf
NE Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing
NE Speech Language & Hearing Association
NE Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing
Self
Self
Self
Deaf Educator - NE Westside Community Schools
Self
Arc of Nebraska
Self
NE Medical Association
NE Hands and Voices
Self
Self

Opponents:

Robert Bell
Misti Chmiel
Emily Marquis

Representing:

NE Insurance Federation
Licensing Board for Hearing Instruments Specialists
Ne Hearing Society

Neutral:

Representing:

Summary of purpose and/or changes:

This bill would enact five new sections to require individual and group health benefit plans which provide dependent coverage to include coverage for hearing aids and associated services for covered children under the age of nineteen.

The bill would apply to group or individual sickness and accident insurance policies, health maintenance organization contracts, subscriber contracts, employee medical, surgical, or hospital care benefit plans, or self-funded employee benefit plans to the extent not preempted by federal law. The bill would also apply policies, contracts, or plans offered or administered by the state or its political subdivisions. The bill would not apply to small employer group plans or policies providing limited-benefit coverage.

The bill would provide that covered items and services shall be covered on a continual basis to the extent that benefits paid for such items and services during the immediately preceding forty-eight-month period have not exceeded three thousand dollars.

The bill would provide that a health insurance plan shall be exempt from its provisions for a plan year if the cost of coverage would exceed one percent of all premiums collected under such plan for such plan year.

Explanation of amendments:

The committee amendments would make two changes in the bill.

First, the amendments would provide that a "hearing impairment" would be an impairment diagnosed "by an otolaryngologist with an auditory assessment completed" by a licensed audiologist.

Second, the amendments would provide that a covered hearing aid shall be one purchased from a licensed audiologist "with the medical clearance from an otolaryngologist."

Matt Williams, Chairperson