

Kubeck, Diane

From: safontana@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, February 11, 2010 11:32 AM
To: Kubeck, Diane
Subject: Fwd: H.B. 5009

D,

Testimony for today.

SF

-----Original Message-----

From: Julie Bossenberry <jbossenberry@snet.net>
To: SAFontana@aol.com
Cc: aburton@ctaud.org
Sent: Wed, Feb 10, 2010 9:20 pm
Subject: H.B. 5009

Dear State Representative Fontana,

I am in support of H.B. 5009 AN ACT CONCERNING WELLNESS PROGRAMS AND EXPANSION OF HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE. I am unable to attend the public hearing tomorrow but the Connecticut Academy of Audiology (CTAA), of which I am a founding member, will be presenting public testimony in favor of this bill. The bill was proposed on February 3rd and referred to the Joint Committee for Insurance and Real Estate.

This bill proposes to change the current \$1000 hearing aid benefit for children age 12 and younger to 18 and younger. This has been proposed in the last three legislative sessions and made it all the way to the governor's desk last year. Had the proposal not been bundled with other unfavorable items to the governor, it would likely have passed.

Here is the actual paragraph from the bill:

Each individual health insurance policy providing coverage of the type specified in subdivisions (1), (2), (4), (11) and (12) of section 38a-469 delivered, issued for delivery, renewed, amended or continued in this state [on or after October 1, 2001,] shall provide coverage for hearing aids for children twelve (PROPOSED IN THIS BILL IS EIGHTEEN) years of age or younger. Such hearing aids shall be considered durable medical equipment under the policy and the policy may limit the hearing aid benefit to one thousand dollars within a twenty-four-month period.

As an audiologist in Connecticut for the past 26 years, I cannot overstate the importance of providing hearing instruments to children with hearing

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loss during the critical educational period up to 18 years of age. Hearing impaired children are not like small adults; because their auditory systems are undergoing neurologic maturation, they need proper audibility of spoken language . In other words, hearing loss doesn't just prevent them from receiving information, but negatively affects the formation of needed neural pathways that allow for sound to be interpreted and for auditory-verbal learning to take place. Lost years of stimulation cannot be regained.

I urge you to support this bill and thank you for the good work you are doing in my district.

Sincerely,

Julie Bossenberry, Au.D.
80 Tokeneke Dr.
North Haven, CT 06473
(203) 287-1052