

CONNECTICUT SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Dear Senator and Representative Rowe,

My name is Mallory Buckingham. I am the Vice President for Legislative Affairs with the CT Speech Language Hearing Association (CSHA).

I am very sorry that I'm unable to attend your committee's Adolescent Health Care Information Forum and Public Hearing tomorrow. I am writing to bring your attention to the issue of hearing loss in adolescents.

Recent research has found 1 in 5 teenagers has a significant hearing loss. The prevalence has increased 30% in a decade, a startling and concerning development (Shargarosky et al, 2006).

Special education for a child with hearing loss costs schools an additional \$420,000, and has a lifetime cost of approximately \$1 million per individual. (Self Help for the Hard of Hearing Facts on Hearing Loss in Children). The impact of untreated hearing loss is quantified to be in excess of \$100 billion annually. (Better Hearing Institute survey, "Impact of Untreated Hearing Loss on Household Income, August 2005).

Currently, CT insurance companies only cover the cost of hearing aids for children birth to 12 years old. The estimated cost to the state for extending the hearing aid benefit to children 13 to 18 years old is around \$500,000. If a health insurance mandate for adolescent hearing aids were passed next year, or the year after, it would realize a huge savings to our state in special education costs, and at the same time, improve academic and social aspects of these children's lives.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have and would like to offer our support for any adolescent hearing loss initiatives you may undertake.

Sincerely,

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References

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Self Help for the Hard of Hearing Facts on Hearing Loss in Children PDF at:

http://www.google.com/#hl=en&sugexp=ldymls&xhr=t&q=Self+Help+for+the+Hard+of+Hearing+Facts+on+Hearing+Loss+in+Children&cp=67&qe=U2VsZiBIZWxwIGZvciB0aGUgSGFyZCBvZiBIZWFyaW5nIEZhY3RzIG9uIEh1YXJpbmcgTG9zeyBpbjB0aGlsZHZHJlbg&qesig=Vl3KL20BOc98TdWkyKNQg&pkc=AFgZ2t8OgGTBq7mULBg76l75gpSsOyET2Yu557KldNoUWofTKEX_Y3HRnb1YJDyrKFLWgl25msMNCiAn!He02LuqzAae1w&pf=p&client=psy&site=&source=hp&aq=f&aqi=&aql=&oq=Self+Help+for+the+Hard+of+Hearing+Facts+on+Hearing+Loss+in+Children&pbx=1&fp=87581eb4c8da6568

Select **“facts on hearing loss”**, at www.hearingloss.com then click **PDF**.