



University of Connecticut
Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences

College of Liberal Arts
and Sciences

Co-Chairs Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson, ranking members Senator Welch, Representative Srinivasan and members of the public health committee, thank you for raising these bills and bringing them to public hearing for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB 5991.

Survey data from the Center for Disease Control suggest that 12.5% of school aged children (6-19) are demonstrating hearing losses consistent with noise exposure (Niskar et al., 2001). Healthy People 2020 has the following objectives: ENT VSL – 4.3 aims to “increase the proportion of adolescents aged 12-19 years who have had a hearing examination in the past five years.” ENT VSL-6.2 aims to “Increase the proportion of adolescents aged 12 to 19 years who have ever used hearing protection devices (earplugs, earmuffs) when exposed to loud sounds or noise.” The American Academy of Audiology Hearing Screening Summary recommends screening “for high frequency hearing loss where efforts to provide education on hearing loss prevention exist.” The school setting is the ideal place to identify and educate children about this public health issue. The implementation of a hearing screening program at the high school level, has several implications in terms of resources as there is currently no hearing screening program at this level. Therefore, research would be necessary to explore the incidence of hearing loss in this population and make appropriate recommendations for a cost effective screening program. I support funding research in this area.

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References:

Niskar AS, Kieszak SM, Holmes AE, Esteban E, Rubin C, Brody DJ, Estimated prevalence of noise-induced hearing threshold shifts among children 6 to 19 years of age: the Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 1988-1994, United States, Pediatrics. 2001 Jul;108(1):40-3.

Meinke & Dice, Comparison of Audiometric Screening Criteria for the Identification of Noise-Induced Hearing Loss in Adolescents, American Journal of Audiology. December 2007;Vol. 16, S190-S202.

American Academy of Audiology Fact Sheet

<http://www.audiology.org/resources/consumer/Documents/FSHearingLossChildren08.pdf>

Robert V. Harrison PhD DS, Noise induced hearing loss in children; a “less than silent” environmental danger.http://www.hearingfoundation.ca/User/Docs/Harrison_Noise_induced_hearing_loss_paper_format_ted_1.pdf

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