

**Brief explanation of the request:**

Provide funding for an actuarial study with the Office of the Insurance Commissioner on the aggregate statewide utilization and cost impacts to provide hearing instrument coverage for children eighteen years of age or younger, and separately, for children eighteen years of age or younger *and* adults.

**Amount being requested:**

FY 2022: 75,000.00

**Description of how the funds will be used:**

Today, children who are born with hearing loss in our state often are not able to get hearing aids and reach their full learning potential because insurance companies are not required to cover the cost of hearing aids. Twenty-five states have mandates for insurance companies to cover hearing aids for children.

This proviso will allow Washington state to gain accurate data on the utilization and costs to cover hearing instruments for youth eighteen years of age or younger, and separately, for youth eighteen years of age or younger *and* adults.

The data and report will show the total annual cost and per member per month costs to provide this coverage, and will provide recommendations for distributing state payments to defray the cost of the benefit coverage described in House Bill 1047 (hearing instruments/children) for health carriers.

**Proviso language:**

(x) (a) \$75,000 of the insurance commissioner's regulatory account--state appropriation is provided solely for a service utilization, cost and implementation analysis of requiring coverage for the hearing instruments benefit described in House Bill 1047 (hearing instruments/children) for children who are eighteen years of age or younger and for children and adults.

(b) The commissioner must contract with one or more consultants to:

(i) Obtain projected utilization and cost data from Washington state health carriers for health plans, as defined in RCW 48.43.005, to provide an estimate of aggregate statewide utilization and cost impacts of the coverage described in House Bill 1047 (hearing instruments/children) separately for children who are eighteen years of age or younger and for children and adults, expressed as total annual cost and as a per member per month cost;

(ii) Assess the impact of federal and state health care nondiscrimination laws on the scope of the benefit described in House Bill 1047 (hearing instruments/children); and

(iii) Provide recommendations for distributing state payments to defray the cost of the benefit coverage described in House Bill 1047 (hearing instruments/children) for health carriers.

(c) The commissioner must report the findings of the analysis to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 15, 2021.

**Other members who support the request:**

Representative Tina Orwall, 33<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District  
Representative Sharon Wylie, 49<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
Representative Lisa Callan, 5<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
Representative Shelley Kloba, 1<sup>st</sup> Legislative District  
Representative Lisa Dolan, 22<sup>nd</sup> Legislative District  
Representative Dan Bronoske, 28<sup>th</sup> LD Legislative District  
Representative Lillian Ortiz-Self, 21<sup>st</sup> Legislative District  
Representative Jessica Bateman, 22<sup>nd</sup> Legislative District  
Representative Roger Goodman, 45<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
Representative Tarra Simmons, 23<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District