

13 “Lucky” Ways to Participate in Legislative Efforts Within Your State:

Lessons from Idaho’s Progressive Pediatric Hearing Aid Legislation



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13 “Lucky” Legislative Concepts



1. Do your homework
2. Develop elevator speech
3. Call/visit your local representatives
4. Build a team
5. Set goals/expectations
6. Get bipartisan support
7. Bill vs. Rule change
8. Infographics, visuals & Communications
9. Know State Statistics
10. Collaborate with other states like yours
11. Testify confidently
12. Review parliamentary procedures
13. Express gratitude

1. Do Your Homework



- What is the current law?
- Research Code online
- Call the legislative research Library in your state – Idaho 2 Conflicting - Attorney General Opinion
- Do you know of parents who have appealed based on laws?
- What has already been done? Who is already working on this issue?

2. Develop elevator speech



- 2 mins or less critical substantive information & be ready to stand and deliver at any moment
- Don't beat around the bush
- Representative Pat MacDonald

3. Contact local representatives



- Start with local representatives in your district
- Look for Representatives on H&W Committee
- Use your prepared elevator speech
- They want to know:
 - *who is this affecting,
 - *what will happen if we don't make this change,
 - *how much it'll cost.
- Tell them about the fact that your claims keep getting denied and you need help.
- Ask if you can meet in person to discuss the problem

4. Build a Team



- Get a Core Group – to see it through at every meeting – Parent base is powerful
- Get an extended multidisciplinary group professionals – including Dr.'s, teachers, audiologists, to call upon to give advice, testimony, at critical/fine tuning times group together ask for participation/feedback.
- Schedule meetings in person or via Zoom- plan out each member's role on the team and a course of action.
- Multiple areas of State



5. Set Goals and Expectations



- Coverage for 0-26 years old
- \$3,000 every 3 years per hearing aid per ear
- Congenital AND acquired hearing losses
- Define hearing devices (CI, BAHA, HA)
- Speech and language habilitation

Idaho Pediatric Hearing Device Rule Change



“Hearing aids, auditory osseointegrated (bone conduction) devices, cochlear implants and examination for or fitting of them, for congenital or acquired hearing loss that, without intervention may result in cognitive or speech development deficits of a covered dependent child, covering not less than one device every thirty-six(36) months per ear with loss and not less than forty-five(45) language/speech therapy visits during the first twelve(12) months after delivery of the covered device.”

6. Get Bipartisan Support



- This is not a partisan issue but you need bipartisan support to get it through
- Politician's want to hear from us and need to show their contribution to the community.
- Illana Rubel, Pat McDonald. Blue vs. Red, Social programs vs no law changes
- Reasons we got traction
 - *Rep. Pat McDonald's support as a Republican
 - *Meeting with Dir. H&W Committee Chair - following his direction

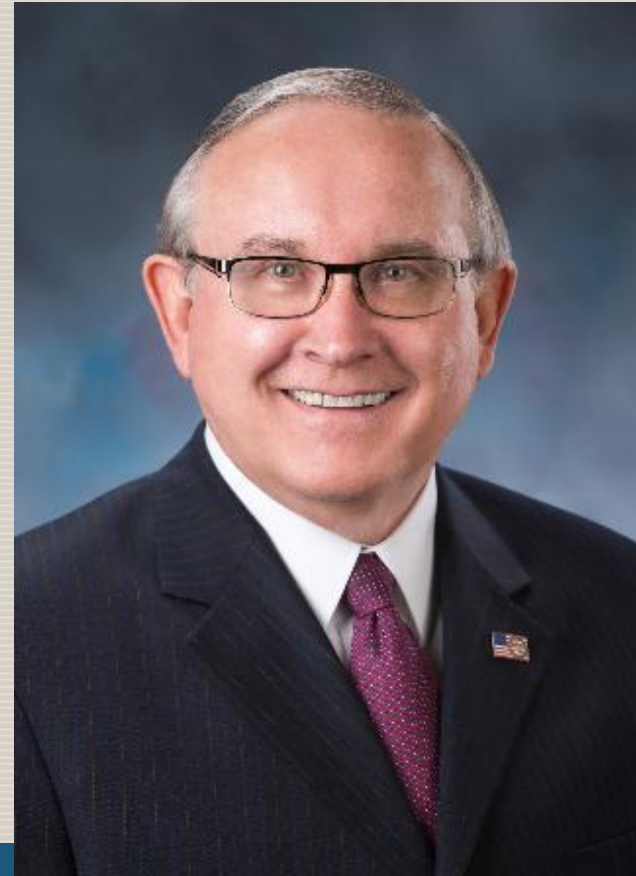
Bipartisan Sponsorship



Ilana Rubel (D)



Patrick McDonald (R)



7. Bill vs. Rule change



- Most changes are coming through amendments to the laws & insurance codes mentioned above which is a lot easier to get done
- Department of Insurance - DOI
<https://doi.idaho.gov/publicinformation/laws/Rulemaking>

8. Infographics, Visuals, Communications



- Use a visual to quickly and effectively display points of your elevator speech
- What's the issue?
- Who does this affect?
- What is the long term impact?
- What is the cost?
- Texas great info-graphic



Idaho insurance providers **do not** cover
pediatric hearing aids.
3 Idaho sisters. 3 sets of hearing aids.
\$6,000 each set x 3, \$18,000 every 3-5 years.

Idaho Families Need Pediatric
Hearing Aid Legislation.



Please join Rep. Rubel in supporting
pediatric hearing aid legislation.
22 States have pediatric hearing aid legislation, 8 in progress.



"Research shows that by the time a child with hearing loss graduates from high school, more than \$400,000 per child can be saved in special education costs if the child is identified early and given appropriate educational, medical, and audiological services."
White, K. R., (1995). Universal screening for infant hearing impairment:
International Journal of Pediatric Otorhinolaryngology

Idaho Families of Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Children Need Your Help

idhandsandvoices.org





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IDAHO HANDS & VOICES™ 

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Idaho Families of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children Need Your Help

idhandsandvoices.org

IDAHO HANDS & VOICES™ 



SB552 & HB490 HEARING AID & COCHLEAR IMPLANT COVERAGE FOR CHILDREN IN TEXAS

www.letexashear.org

THE NEED

Hearing aids are considered cosmetic and not covered by insurance. However, a lack of early intervention and amplification in young children can severely impact **speech, language, and brain development; academic achievement; and social and emotional development.**

THE STATS

3 in 1,000 babies are born with permanent hearing loss.

With an annual birth rate of nearly 400,000 babies, Texas has approximately **1,200 infants** born with some level of hearing loss each year.

THE HISTORY

Recognizing that early intervention is key, Texas was an early adopter of **universal newborn hearing screenings** in 1999. However, most health insurance policies do not cover, or only pay a small stipend toward hearing technology which is the next critical step in early intervention.

THE COST

Hearing aids cost up to \$6,000 per pair and must be replaced every 3 - 5 years.

Cochlear implant surgery is covered by most insurance plans but necessary accessories often come out of pocket.

Without intervention, special education costs for deaf or hard of hearing students can total \$420,000 per child with a lifetime cost of approx. \$1 million in special education, lost wages and health complications.

THE PEOPLE

Representative **Rodney Anderson** is sponsoring HB 490 in the Texas House of Reps.

There are currently 19 authors and co-authors on HB490 including S. Davis, D. Howard, T. Oliverson, D. Bernal, C. Anderson, C. Bell, G. Capriglione, D. Darby, J. Isaac, C. Israel, J. Johnson, W. Metcalf, R. Miller, S. Muñoz, Jr., J. Raney, K. Roberts, E. Thompson & J. White

Senator **Lois Kolkhorst** is sponsoring SB552 in the Texas Senate.
SB552 is co-authored by Sen. Garcia.

THE BOTTOM LINE

20 other states have already passed legislation requiring insurance coverage for children's hearing devices. Many of these states were NOT supportive of insurance mandates in general but made an exception because of the low premium increase required to off set the cost, estimated between **\$0.03 and \$0.04** per insured citizen per month.

Georgia is next to pass this legislation 47 - 6 in House & 155 - 5 in Senate.
It's on the Governor's desk now!

SUPPORT TEXAS CHILDREN! VOTE YES ON SB552 & HB490!



LET UTAH CHILDREN HEAR

To encourage and support access to quality hearing health care including state-of-the-art hearing technology for all children in Utah who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.



PROVIDING HEARING TO CHILDREN IS COST EFFECTIVE

100

NEWBORNS

are assessed for and diagnosed as Deaf or Hard of Hearing every year in the state of Utah. Many more are identified at older ages.



24

OTHER STATES



have already passed similar legislation while several more states are currently working on passing legislation.

10%

INSURANCE COVERAGE

of parents report insurance coverage for hearing aids for their child.



COST EFFECTIVE

FOR UTAHNS



to cover hearing aids, bone conduction hearing devices, microphone systems, and rehabilitative services.

CHANGE A KID'S WORLD

Email us at letutahchildrenhear@gmail.com
Call us at (435) 764-4074

LET UTAH CHILDREN HEAR



PROVIDING HEARING TO CHILDREN IS COST EFFECTIVE

The Need

Speech, language, social and cognitive development of children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing is likely to be impaired by their hearing loss. However, access to hearing aids and intervention services improve outcomes dramatically.

Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing can learn to hear, speak and learn at a common rate with their hearing peers when provided with appropriate intervention.

The Facts

Utah spear-headed universal newborn hearing screenings by mandating screenings in 1998. However, children identified early do not have access to hearing devices and habilitation services through insurance in order to complete the next vital steps in early intervention.

Approximately 30,000 babies are born in Utah every year. 100 of those babies will be diagnosed with a significant permanent hearing loss. About 40% of those children are covered by Medicaid.

The Concern

Under Utah code 31A-22-610, insurance companies are required to include coverage for care and treatments of medically diagnosed congenital defects. Childhood hearing loss is a congenital defect in most cases. Insurance companies are currently not covering treatments.

Currently, the state funds the Children's Hearing Aid Program which only provides a single pair of hearing aids for children age 0-6. This program is underserving children with hearing loss in the state.

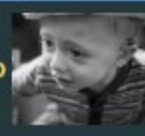
The Cost

A pair of hearing aids can cost up to \$6,000 and must be replaced every 3-5 years. Since hearing loss can be hereditary, some families have multiple children with hearing loss needs. Many families cannot afford to provide the necessary rehabilitative treatments.

Providing hearing aids to children with hearing loss will reduce the costs borne by the state, including an estimated \$2,000 in special education, and much more in social welfare programs. Lifetime cost estimates of insufficiently treated hearing loss can total approximately \$1 Million.



CHANGE A KID'S WORLD



• <https://www.letutahchildrenhear.com/>

• Use website builders or templates

• Wix/ Canva

8. ...Communications



- Points of contact with legislators 1-3 team members
- Letter writing - brief 1 page,
- Multiple areas of state - Multiple representatives
- Gratitude vs anger & demands
- Children - pictures
- Letters of support - provide sample letters & addresses.

9. Know State Statistics



- EHDI Coordinator
- # Children born in state annually 22,196 - 2016
- # Diagnosed with hearing loss annually
 - congenital + acquired - 55 + 20
- # Children receiving DHH school services
- # Children covered under medicaid 40% in Idaho

10. Collaborate with States Like Yours



- Other Red States: Utah, Idaho, Texas, Georgia, Florida, Oregon etc...
- What success have they had?
- Use sites like NCHAM/EHDI to get current information
- Call representatives there

FISCAL NOTE, 85TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

March 29, 2017

TO: Honorable Larry Phillips, Chair, House Committee on Insurance

FROM: Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB490 by Anderson, Rodney (Relating to health benefit plan coverage of hearing aids and cochlear implants for certain individuals.), **Committee Report 1st House, Substituted**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would amend the Insurance Code relating to health benefit plan coverage of hearing aids and cochlear implants for certain individuals.

It is assumed that all duties and responsibilities necessary to implement the provisions of the bill would have no significant fiscal impact and could be accomplished utilizing existing staff and resources, based on information reported by the Texas Department of Insurance, Employees Retirement System, Teacher Retirement System, The University of Texas System Administration, and Texas A&M University System Administration.

Local Government Impact

No significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies:

LBB Staff: UP, AG, AM, TSI

11. Testify Confidently



- Know who you are talking to and what stories and testimonies are appropriate
- Respond to Representative concerns - listen
- Initially hesitant to bring up speech component
- Families vs. Professionals -
 - technical details/fine tuning
- Review parliamentary procedure





12. Media



- Get the media involved



Media Coverage
KIVITV News Clip





Media Clips

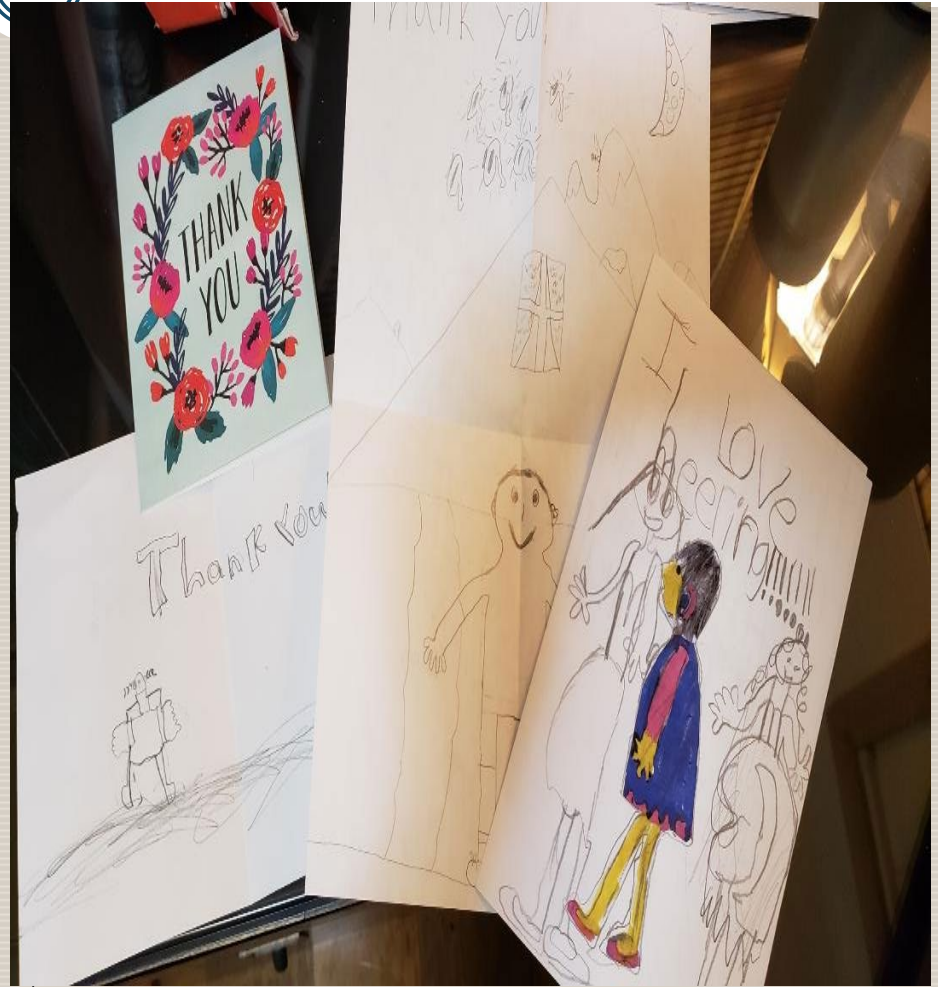


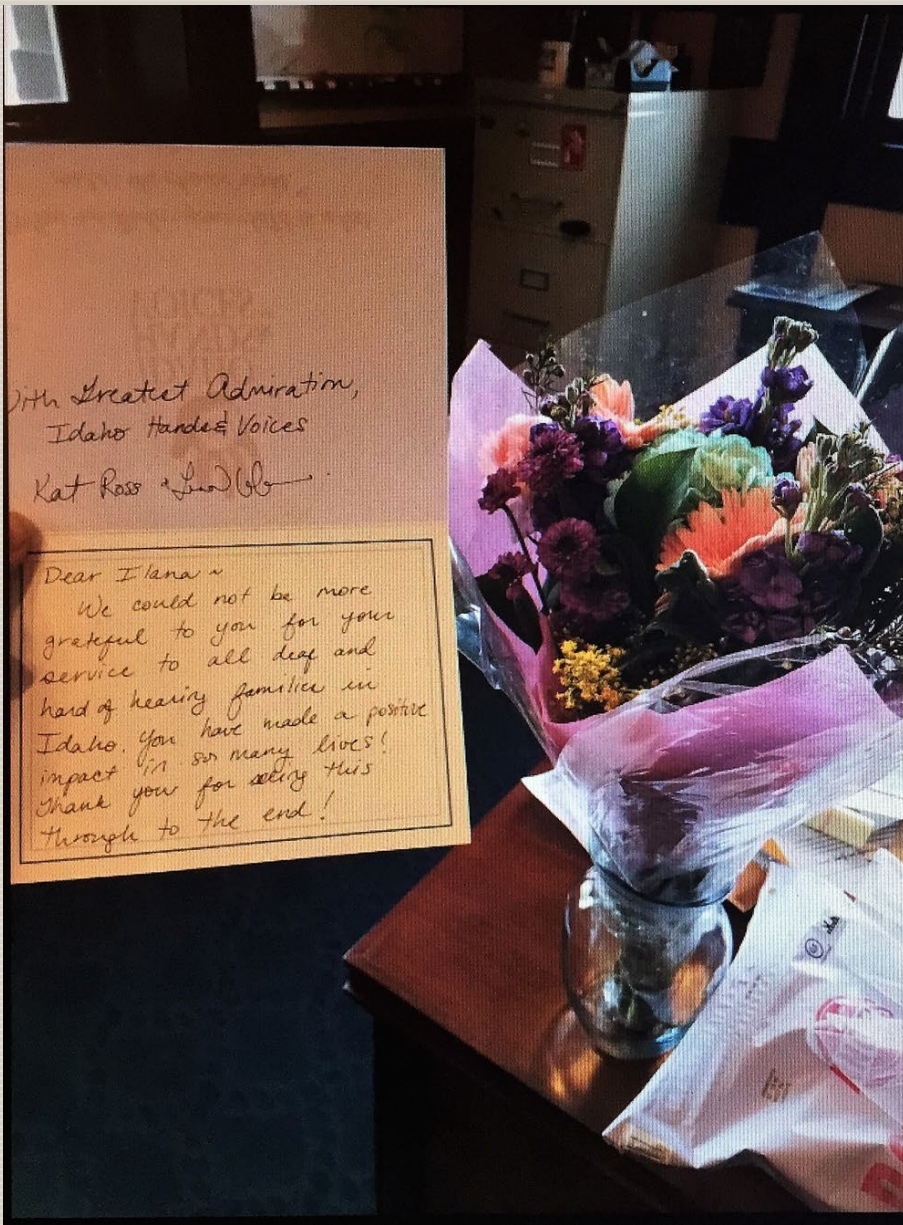
<https://www.kivitv.com/news/advocates-fight-for-childrens-hearing-aids-to-be-covered-by-insurance?fbclid=IwARogawEVSlGlxCIoVY1gtpc9dPnJa83bz1KoNr1uXXSP2GonAYGJTy3IQi4>

https://www.ktvb.com/article/news/health/private-insurance-doesnt-cover-costs-for-childrens-hearing-aids/277-591683741?fbclid=IwAR3S5uHXT4ZVxSOR6F9owoP6YeUN_YolSIHCMUP4t2DJzxDgCfI19oEKv88

13. Always Express Gratitude

- Be gracious during meetings and testimonies
- Write hand written cards, send flowers
- Conflict Resolution Skills





Ilana Rubel

February 5 · 🌐



Just when I thought it was not possible to love our hearing aid advocate moms any more than I already do, I found these flowers on my desk. Thank you Lesa Coleman, Kat Ross and Idaho Hands and Voices!

👍❤️ 178

6 Comments

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share



Mike Hranac More than well deserved. Thanks for your passion and diligence. You make us all proud. Loves. 🍷👍👍👍

Like · Reply · 1w



Jason Singleton Rubel you so rock

Like · Reply · 1w



↳ Ilana Rubel replied · 1 Reply



Michelle Williams Wilson Well Deserved!!! Glad they are spoiling you.

Like · Reply · 1w



Lori Wright Great work!

Like · Reply · 1w

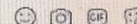


Lesa Coleman Small token from Idaho Families whose children have hearing loss! We greatly appreciate your service!!

Like · Reply · 1w



Write a comment...



We Can Meet



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