



Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC)
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 26, 2026

TO: The Honorable Members of the Joint Finance Committee
Delaware General Assembly

FROM: Ann C. Fisher, Vice Chairperson
GACEC

RE: **Senate Substitute 2 for Senate Bill No. 269 Hearing Aid Coverage**

The Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) has reviewed Senate Substitute 2 for Senate Bill No. 269. This bill will increase the minimum required coverage for hearing aids by requiring insurers to cover the entire cost of medically necessary hearing aids for individuals younger than 24 years of age, covered as a dependent by the policyholder. Council **supports** the proposed legislation.

Early access to language is essential for child development. Children identified as Deaf or hard of hearing, rely on hearing aids for language development. Language development leads to success in school. Medicaid coverage of hearing aids for children younger than 21 years old applies only to children who qualify. Delaware currently requires private insurers to provide minimum coverage of \$1,000 for each hearing aid for individuals younger than 24 years old, covered as a dependent by the policyholder. The cost of pediatric hearing aids can vary broadly but can cost from \$3,000 to \$5,000 out-of-pocket. This can be too expensive for families who are not qualified for Medicaid coverage, even with the current \$1,000 coverage requirement.

This substitute bill is cost effective and ensures that Delaware children have the necessary devices to access sound and language.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our support and comments. Please feel free to reach out to me or Pam Weir at the GACEC office if you would like to have discussions on any issues impacting individuals with disabilities in Delaware. Have a nice day.