

Brendan Williams
South Portland
LD 167

To the members of the HHS Committee,

My name is Brendan Williams and I'm a hard of hearing individual from South Portland, Maine. I've been hard of hearing for most of my life and have had hearing aids at various times in my life. I usually wore them as a kid when I was in school and they helped a lot with understanding what others were saying.

While I didn't become hard of hearing because I was getting older, we do have an aging population in Maine as our amazing Baby Boomer generation is aging and many will find themselves losing their hearing over time. One of the major concerns with hearing aids is that they are not affordable. Eyeglasses for folks with bad eye vision have an easier time to access the tools they need to see better, but the deaf and HOH community face barriers to obtain hearing aids.

A few months ago, I decided to get an updated hearing test at Hearing Life in South Portland and I failed the hearing test miserably, which is expected. When I asked the doctor about possibly purchasing hearing aids, he told me about how insurance companies see hearing aids as a "Cosmetic" or "Implants", which I think is crazy since I just want to hear my co-workers at work, not get on a reality show like the Real Housewives of Cape Elizabeth, but anyway, Maine does have some barriers to get hearing aids and I think this bill will help many people living with hearing loss including myself. I hope this committee will vote to pass this bill out of committee.

Thank you,
Brendan K. Williams