

March 2023 TAA Legislative Recap

March was a busy month for TAA at the Capitol! We had 16 participants in our Austin Advocacy Day on March 1st. Following this historic turnout, we had two bills heard in the House Committee on Insurance, a third bill heard in the House Committee on Public Health, and one heard in the Senate Committee on Health & Human Services. A Texas-sized *THANK YOU* to the following TAA members who traveled to Austin to provide committee testimony:

- Haley Owen, AuD (Dallas)
- Kim Ringer, AuD (Austin)
- Marjorie Grantham, PhD (Round Rock)
- Vickie Tuten, AuD (New Braunfels)
- Alex Morris, AuD (Houston)

Please see below for a summary of the current progress of our 2023 legislative initiatives.

Bill	Sponsor	Summary	Activity in March	You Can Help!
HB109 SB51	J. Johnson J. Zaffirini	prevents insurance plan from denying payment for a hearing aid if patient or parent chooses a more expensive option than allowed by the insurance plan	<u>House</u> : Heard in House Insurance Committee on 3/20; passed; awaiting vote in House <u>Senate</u> : heard in Health & Human Services Committee on 4/5	Contact your Rep and ask for their support If your Senator sits on this committee , please contact them and voice your support
SB2017	J. Zaffirini	TDLR bill to address OTC. This legislation clarifies the difference between a prescription HA and an over-the-counter HA, as well as the implications for licensees covered by Chapter 401 (Audiologists) and Chapter 402 (hearing instrument specialists) in the Texas Occupational Code	Awaiting hearing in Sen. Health & Human Services Comm.	If your Senator sits on this committee , please contact them and ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask for them to hear the bill - Express your support for the bill
HB1875	R. Guillen	audiology interstate licensure compact (ASLP)	Scheduled for hearing on 4/3 – House Public Health Comm. Opposed by TX ENT Association	If your representative sits on this committee , please call their office & voice your support!
SB619	N. Johnson	removes duplicate parental consent for the reporting of failed newborn hearing screening results to the primary resource center and various state agencies.	Awaiting committee hearing in Senate Health & Human Services Comm.	If your Senator sits on this committee , please contact them and voice your support
HB468	S. Theirry	raises the mandated age cap for hearing aid/cochlear implant coverage from 10 years to 25 years of age	Heard in House Insurance Comm. on 3/28, awaiting vote	Contact your Representative and voice your support

HB4068 SB1285	J. Johnson N. Johnson	requires newborn testing for congenital cytomegalovirus (CMV)	House: Awaiting hearing in House Public Health Comm Senate: awaiting hearing in Health & Human Services Comm	If your Rep sits on this committee , call & voice your support If your Sen. Sits on this committee , call & voice your support
HB4334	S. Thierry	Allows TDLR to establish requirements for fitting & dispensing of hearing aids through telehealth	Awaiting hearing in House Public Health Comm	If your Rep sits on this committee , call & voice your support

What can you do to help? [Find out who your elected officials are](#) and give their office a call! It takes no more than three minutes to say “*I am your constituent, I am an audiologist, and I support [insert bill number].*”

Reach out any time with questions or concerns to Gov@texasaudiology.org. There is no one better equipped than **you** to have a conversation about ears with policymakers who are paid to listen. Let’s make April our best advocacy month yet!

Alexander Morris, AuD
VP of Government Issues
Texas Academy of Audiology