

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 98-4730, by Representatives Conway, Parlette and Cody

WHEREAS, There is a clear need in the United States for the early identification of hearing impairment in infants and young children; and

WHEREAS, Approximately one of every one thousand children is born deaf and many more with significant, yet less severe, degrees of hearing impairment; and

WHEREAS, Reduced hearing acuity during infancy and early childhood interferes with the development of speech and verbal language skills and can have harmful effects on social, emotional, cognitive, and academic development as well as a person's vocational and economic potential; and

WHEREAS, There is general agreement that hearing impairment should be recognized as early as possible, so that the remediation process can take full advantage of the plasticity of the developing sensory systems and so that the child can enjoy normal social development; and

WHEREAS, Leading health care professionals now recommend that universal screening be implemented for all infants within the first three months of life as an important adjunct to child health care;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the importance and need for universal hearing tests for all infants within the first three months; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives to Secretary of the Department of Health, Administrator of the Health Care Authority, Assistant Secretary of Medical Assistance, Insurance Commissioner, members of the Washington State Board of Health, National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

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