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August 12 2022

Michelle Baass
Director
California Department of Health Care Services
1501 Capitol Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95813

Director Baass,

As California legislators, one of our most important jobs is to ensure necessary public services to the most vulnerable communities throughout the state are provided effectively and efficiently. We pride ourselves in the delivery of critical healthcare services to those vulnerable populations. However, when the delivery of those services is impaired by a seeming lack of focus within a bureaucracy, we are compelled to speak on their behalf. We believe that transparency is necessary in every department to make sure those who need critical services are getting them, and that taxpayers are not paying for inefficient, failing programs.

A [recent media report](#) shows that the Hearing Aid Coverage for Children Program, which was established to provide hearing aids to approximately 2,300 children who need them, has only provided 39 hearing aids to date. What makes this situation even more alarming is the Department of Health Care Services' failure to explain why so few children have been helped. It strains belief that, after a year of operation, this program has only assisted a fraction of those estimated to be eligible, and without explanation.

We are writing to ask you to explain why only 39 out of 2,300 children have received hearing aids, what barriers are preventing you from providing 2,300 children hearing aids, and what corrective actions have been taken. The media report indicates that DHCS has "implemented key improvements" to the program. However that may be, 2,300 children in California need hearing aids that the State of California promised to provide, yet is failing to do so.

We do not doubt that you know providing hearing aids to children so they can better function at school and home is a worthy cause. But if the state promises hearing aids to children, it must do better than reaching less than 2% of that goal.

Thank you for taking time to respond to this request. Please call (916) 651-4021 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



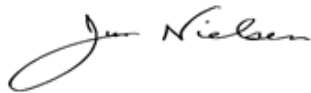
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38th Senate District



Brian Dahle
1st Senate District



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4th Senate District



Andreas Borgeas
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