



AMERICAN
SPEECH-LANGUAGE-
HEARING
ASSOCIATION

February 20, 2018

The Honorable Millie Hamner
200 E Colfax Ave, Room 307
Denver, CO 80203

Re: HB 1006

Dear Representative Hamner:

On behalf of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, I write to express support for the proposed newborn hearing screening provisions in HB 1006.

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) is the national professional, scientific, and credentialing association for 198,000 members and affiliates who are audiologists; speech-language pathologists; speech, language, and hearing scientists; audiology and speech-language pathology support personnel; and students. Over 3,500 of our members reside in Colorado.

ASHA supports the provisions in HB 1006 that enable follow-up services, after the initial newborn screening, with specialists including audiologists. ASHA also applauds the inclusion of audiologists on the Advisory Committee on Hearing in Newborn Infants.

As you know, newborn hearing screening is now the standard of care in hospitals nationwide. In 2014, 96.1% of babies born in the United States had their hearing screened before 1 month of age and 6,163 infants were diagnosed with permanent hearing loss.ⁱ According to the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing, there is a growing body of literature indicating that when identification and intervention occur at no later than 6 months of age for infants who are deaf or hard of hearing, the infants perform as much as 20 to 40 percentile points higher on school-related measures (vocabulary, articulation, intelligibility, social adjustment, and behavior).ⁱⁱ

Thank you for your leadership in ensuring proper hearing health in newborns and infants. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Eileen Crowe, ASHA's director of state association relations, at ecrowe@asha.org.

Sincerely,

Elise Davis-McFarland, PhD, CCC-SLP
2018 ASHA President

ⁱ American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (n.d.). Newborn Hearing Screening. Retrieved from <https://www.asha.org/practice-portal/professional-issues/newborn-hearing-screening/>.

ⁱⁱ Joint Committee on Infant Hearing. (2007). *Year 2007 Position Statement: Principles and Guidelines for Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Programs*. Retrieved from https://www.infantheating.org/resources/2007_JCIH.pdf.