



May 16, 2019

The Honorable Richard Bloom
State Capitol, Room 2003
Sacramento, CA 95814

Michael D. Belote

Dennis K. Albiani

Faith Lane Borges

Erinn P. Ryberg

Anthony Molina

SUBJECT: AB 598 (BLOOM) HEARING AIDES: MINORS – SUPPORT AS PROPOSED TO BE AMENDED

Dear Assembly Member Bloom,

The California Association of Health Underwriters (CAHU) is pleased to **SUPPORT** your measure, **AB 598**, as proposed to be amended coming off of the Assembly Appropriations Committee's Suspense File, which would establish a new health insurance coverage mandate to include coverage for hearing aids for children under age 18.

While CAHU has always appreciated the heart of your measure, there were concerns that as introduced AB 598 would have increased premiums for Californians who are already struggling with access and affordability. With sensitivity to the medical necessity of these devices for children and the fiscal realities of rising premiums, CAHU appreciates your recent amendments to include appropriate cost containment measures, which now achieves a balance of these two critical policy needs.

CAHU is the state's largest association of health insurance agents, brokers and other health insurance industry professionals. Our members help millions of individual Californians, families and businesses evaluate, select, purchase, and use their health care coverage plans. Our agents and brokers also serve as consumer advocates for policyholders and their families year round to help with questions and if coverage disputes arise - all at no additional cost to the consumer.

For these reasons and more, CAHU is pleased to **SUPPORT AB 598 AS PROPOSED TO BE AMENDED OFF THE ASSEMBLY SUSPENSE FILE**. Please feel free to reach Faith Lane Borges at (916) 441-5050.

Sincerely,

Faith Lane Borges

On behalf of the California Association Health Underwriters

cc: Kristene Mapile, Principal Consultant, Assembly Health Committee
Alex Khan, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus