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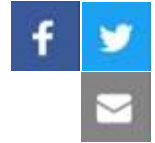
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Proposed Rule Change on Health Coverage for Children's Hearing Aids Moves Forward
Second public meeting on the issue draws strong public support

BOISE, ID – A second public meeting to discuss a rule change to allow health insurance carriers to provide coverage for children suffering hearing loss was held at the Statehouse today. Officials from the Department of Insurance met with Representatives Ilana Rubel (D) District 18, Patrick McDonald (R) District 15, and a host of parents and professionals who testified on behalf of children who require hearing aids and speech therapy to manage hearing loss. The issue pertains to negotiated rulemaking on IDAPA 18-01-30 and 18-01-70.

The initial meeting, July 23, led to a draft of proposed changes of the rule's exclusionary language. Public comment and input from concerned citizens helped bring about revisions that were presented during today's second meeting. Local insurance agent Michelle Wilson spoke about her 14-year-old son who suffers from hearing loss, saying the proposed changes "will help change the lives of thousands of Idaho kids."

Insurance Director Dean Cameron applauded the representatives, community members and insurance carriers who took part in the process to help bring about the proposed rule changes. "I am extremely grateful to all these groups, especially the legislature, for having the confidence in us to move this proposed rule change forward," said Director Cameron.

Insurance Department officials took into consideration all input received to modify language in the rule, which will be slated to be published October 3, followed by a 21-day public comment period ending October 24. It will then go before both the Idaho House and Senate for review.

The Idaho Department of Insurance has been regulating the business of insurance in Idaho since 1901. The mission of the Department is to serve and protect Idahoans by equitably, effectively and efficiently administering the Idaho Insurance Code and the International Fire Code. For more information, visit doi.idaho.gov.

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