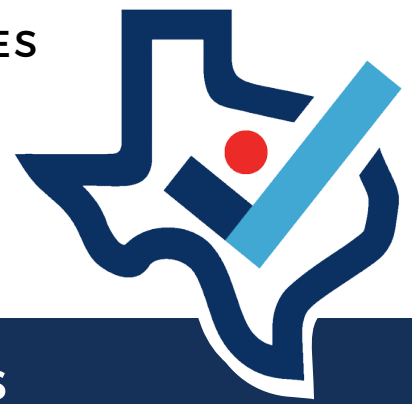


# House Bill (HB) 109

Rep. Julie Johnson



## Health Benefit Coverage for Hearing Aids

The 85th Legislature required insurance companies to cover hearing aids for certain patients. However, some insurers do not allow a patient to acquire a more expensive device than what their plan covers, even if the patient can pay the difference. HB 109 would provide users more freedom to choose their hearing aids.



HB 109 would prevent health benefit plans that provide coverage for hearing aids from denying an enrollee's claim solely on the basis that the price of the hearing aid is more than the amount available under the benefit plan.



HB 109 does not change cost coverage. If the claim for a hearing aid device is more than the amount allowable under their plan, HB 109 expressly does not require the health benefit plan to pay the difference in cost. The enrollee, or some other entity, would pay for the difference.



In 2021, similar legislation was supported by the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, Texas Medical Association, Texas Pediatric Society, Texas Academy of Audiology, and the Texas Hearing Aid Association.

*"For a person who is hard of hearing, the preferred hearing aid can make the difference of full inclusion in society. Some health insurance plans do not allow a patient to select a hearing aid when the cost is more than the plan benefit, even when the patient agrees to pay the extra cost. That restricts choice."*

Public comment to the House Insurance Committee on an identical bill, March 2021

