H-1978.1

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**HOUSE BILL 1854**

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**State of Washington 67th Legislature 2022 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Wicks, Orwall, Davis, Goodman, Gregerson, Macri, Shewmake, Simmons, Slatter, Bergquist, Valdez, Wylie, Fitzgibbon, Pollet, Ortiz-Self, Stonier, Riccelli, and Kloba

AN ACT Relating to requiring coverage for hearing instruments; and adding a new section to chapter 48.43 RCW.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 48.43 RCW to read as follows:

(1) A health carrier offering a health plan issued or renewed on or after January 1, 2023, must include coverage for hearing instruments, including bone conduction hearing devices.

(2) Coverage must include the hearing instrument, the initial assessment, fitting, adjustment, auditory training, and ear molds as necessary to maintain optimal fit.

(3) The maximum benefit amount required by this section is $2,500 per ear with hearing loss every 36 months. This benefit is not subject to the covered individual's deductible.

(4) A covered individual may choose a higher priced hearing instrument and pay the difference between the price of the hearing instrument and the benefit required under this section, without financial or contractual penalty to the covered individual or to the provider of the hearing instrument.

(5) For the purposes of this section, "hearing instrument" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 18.35.010.

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