

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

**Reauthorize the Early Hearing Detection  
and Intervention Program; Cosponsor H.R. 1344**

April 10, 2015

Dear Colleague:

Since 2000, Congress has provided authority to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to address the screening and intervention needs of newborns and children born with permanent hearing loss. When this initiative began, most of these children with hearing loss were not identified until they were 2-3 years old, resulting in speech, language and communication delays.

When legislation was first approved by Congress in 2000, less than 44 percent of newborns were screened for hearing loss. Currently, 96 percent of all newborns are screened, allowing thousands of infants who are born deaf or hard of hearing and their families the benefits of early identification. Not only is this better for children, but it saves millions of dollars each year in reduced special education costs.

H.R. 1344, the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act of 2015, builds upon previous EHDI authorizations to allow vital screening and monitoring to continue. Unfortunately, while most children are screened and those with hearing loss are detected, many infants who fail their newborn screening tests do not receive timely follow-up or fail to follow-through with appropriate services. No matter the reason, loss to follow-up is a critical problem and the bill's increased focus will ensure that children whose hearing loss is detected at birth receive the appropriate services that fit with their family's needs and desires.

We urge you to cosponsor H.R. 1344, the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act of 2015. For more information or to cosponsor, please contact Megan Jackson with Congressman Guthrie's office at x53501 or by email at [Megan.Jackson@mail.house.gov](mailto:Megan.Jackson@mail.house.gov) or Devin McBrayer with Congresswoman Capps' office at x53601 or by email at [Devin.McBrayer@mail.house.gov](mailto:Devin.McBrayer@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,



**BRETT GUTHRIE**  
Member of Congress



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