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September 1, 2020

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Honorable Kathy Crawford
Chair, Families, Children and Seniors
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

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RE: Opposition to HB 5836

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Dear Representative Crawford:

On behalf of the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS) and the Michigan Otolaryngologic Society (MOS), we are writing to express our opposition to HB 5836, "The Revised School Code," a bill that seeks to alter the language acquisition tools, assessments and resources available to families of deaf or hard of hearing (HH) children younger than five years of age.

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The AAO-HNS is a member of a Parents' Choice Alliance, a coalition which supports the rights of parents to choose the developmental communication method most appropriate for their family. National research has shown that the dominate communication method used by families with deaf or HH children is listening and spoken language (approximately 70%). However, HB 5836, as proposed, primarily promotes the use of American Sign Language (ASL), despite the fact that only 6-9% of children with permanent hearing loss will utilize ASL as their primary method of communication.

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As states move forward with consideration of support for early intervention services, we urge legislators to consider improving existing programs rather than introducing unproven new ones.

Thank you, in advance, for your consideration of our concerns. If you have any questions regarding this request, please do not hesitate to contact Janice Brannon, Senior Manager, State Advocacy, AAO-HNS at jbrannon@entnet.org or Dr. Robert Standing, MOS President, at bstand2@gmail.com.

Sincerely,



James C. Denny III, MD, FACS
AAO-HNS EVP/CEO



Robert Standing, MD
MOS President

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