



FOR PLANNING PURPOSES:
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IDINA MENZEL AND RICK J. CARUSO JOIN STATEWIDE “LET CALIFORNIA KIDS HEAR” CAMPAIGN

The Broadway Star and Los Angeles-based Business Leader Will Join Families To Announce Their Support For AB 598 During a Press Conference at The Grove

Los Angeles, CA – Joining Let California Kids Hear and California families, award-winning actress and musician Idina Menzel will kick off a statewide campaign urging the passage of legislation ensuring all children have access to hearing aids. On Monday, August 12 at The Grove in Los Angeles, Menzel will announce her support for Assembly Bill 598 together with Rick J. Caruso, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Caruso. AB 598, authored by Assemblymember Richard Bloom (D— Santa Monica) would require private health insurance companies cover the costs of hearing aids for children.

Currently, there is no such coverage requirement, leaving thousands of California families with no choice but to pay thousands of dollars out-of-pocket for medically necessary hearing aids and related services. Some children who are deaf or hard of hearing are unable to access hearing aids altogether due to the high cost and lack of mandated insurance coverage – depriving them of a critically necessary tool for language and speech development.

“Through my daughter Gianna, I have seen first-hand the tremendous impact that early intervention has for children as they develop speech and language skills as the foundation for future success,” adds Rick J. Caruso. “But for many California families, the expense of hearing aids is a heavy burden. Every child should be offered the same opportunity and access to hearing care no matter their situation.”

Let California Kids Hear, a statewide coalition, is advocating for this legislation.

“We are incredibly grateful to have Idina’s and Rick’s support to shine a light on this effort,” said Let California Kids Hear co-chair Michelle Marciniak. “It’s imperative that all of California’s children have access to the services they need,” added Let California Kids Hear co-chair Lydia Sussman.

AB 598 recently passed the Senate Health Committee and now heads to the Senate Appropriations Committee and then to the full Senate for vote.

WHAT: Let California Kids Hear Campaign Kicks Off with Major Star Power

WHEN: Monday, August 12, 2019 at 10:30 AM

WHO: Idina Menzel, Rick Caruso, Debra Schrader, educational specialist, Michelle Marciniak and Lydia Sussman (co-chairs of Let California Kids Hear), families

WHERE: The Grove, Los Angeles

About Let California Kids Hear:

We are a parent-led initiative whose goal is to secure insurance coverage for children’s hearing aids in California. In California, health insurance plans and policies are not required to cover hearing aids for children. As a result, only 1 in 10 families on privately funded plans have coverage. The other families are forced to either forego hearing aids for their child or pay the steep costs out-of-pocket. California currently lags behind 25 other states that require private insurance coverage for pediatric hearing aids. For more information, visit www.letcalkidshear.com. Find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LetCAKidsHear/>.