



April 9, 2018

Representative Kelly Fenton
House of Representatives
525 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: HF 2653, The Vivian Act

Dear Representative Fenton:

It is with great interest and support that the Minnesota Academy of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck (MAO-HNS) Surgery and the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS) reviewed your bill – HF 2653, an act to require information on human herpesvirus cytomegalovirus (CMV) be made available to certain individuals. As background, our organizations represent physicians who treat diseases and disorders of the ear, nose, throat, and related structures of the head and neck.

As you are aware, CMV infection has been associated with a high level of sensorineural hearing loss in children. According to a study by the American Academy of Pediatrics, it has been reported that approximately 21 percent of hearing loss at birth may be due to CMV. Early diagnosis and treatment of CMV-related hearing loss is crucial to the long-term developmental success of speech language, cognitive, and psycho-social abilities in children. Yet, according to study results in the Journal of Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (JEHDI), awareness rates of this virus are extremely low with 91 percent of women reporting they are unaware of CMV and its potential effect on infants and children.

HF 2653, as introduced, would further the education of women and healthcare practitioners about the virus and make important informational resources available on the prevention, screening, and interventions available in Minnesota. **The MAO-HNS and the AAO-HNS appreciate your sponsorship of this important bill and urge your fellow Representatives in the Health and Human Services Finance Committee to support it also.**

Thank you for this opportunity to share our views with you. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the AAO-HNS State Advocacy team at legstate@entnet.org.

Sincerely,

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

Geoffrey Service, MD
MAO-HNS President