

**Overview of the Hearing Conservation Program
Testimony Prepared for the Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on
Education
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Madam Chair, members of the committee, for your record my name is Bob Runkel, Director of Special Education for the Office of Public Instruction.

This brief presentation will cover Decision Package 16 found on page E-8.

The executive is recommending a present law adjustment of approximately \$22,000 in FY 06 and \$34,000 in FY 07 for the Hearing Conservation Program.

The Hearing Conservation Program is a state-wide program administered by the Division of Special Education for the purpose of ensuring proper identification of children, birth through 21, who have hearing impairments.

Through the support of state funds, the Office of Public Instruction contracts with nine providers (2 school districts, 1 Special Education Cooperative, 2 Universities, and 4 private providers). State funds are supplemented by the providers in the form of administration, use of facilities, and in some cases, funding to support additional services. This program is an excellent example of public-private business partnering for the benefit of children.

Current contracts total \$355,156. The RFP under which the Office of Public Instruction is now contracted anticipated a 3 percent increase per year. Although there is a contingency clause within the current contracts, in the event of inadequate funding, it is believed that to ensure the contractor's continued participation; we will need to provide a minimum of a 3 percent increase per year.

The present law adjustment also provides for an adjustment for the cost of calibration, maintenance of equipment, and replacement of faulty equipment.