

The State of Washington



Proclamation

WHEREAS, approximately 20 percent of the United States population experience hearing loss, including more than 1.2 million Washington residents; and

WHEREAS, approximately 60 percent of people with hearing loss are in the workforce or in school and experience challenges in their daily lives; and

WHEREAS, almost 15 percent of school-age children age 6-19 have some degree of hearing loss; and

WHEREAS, many people do not get treatment for hearing loss because of perceived stigma or are unaware of free resources for hearing screenings; and

WHEREAS, untreated hearing loss can lead to communication challenges, isolation, depression, loss of functionality in the workplace, reduced earnings, increased falls, and possible progression to dementia; and

WHEREAS, Washingtonians can help avoid these consequences by getting an audiology exam, following up with recommended treatments and protecting their hearing by wearing ear protection when in loud settings; and

WHEREAS, businesses and organizations in Washington state can support those with hearing loss by using microphones and assistive devices at public meetings, appointments and events; making captions a standard practice in meetings and appointments, including telehealth visits; and ensuring that entertainment, civic and sports venues have hearing access accommodations and informative signage available; and

WHEREAS, hearing loss is widespread and impacts many people in Washington directly or because they have family, friends and co-workers with hearing loss; and

WHEREAS, for more than 75 years, the month of May has been designated as Better Hearing Month;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Ferguson, governor of the state of Washington, do hereby proclaim May 2026 as

Better Hearing Month

in Washington, and I urge all people in our state to join me in this special observance.



Signed this 6th day of May, 2026


Governor Bob Ferguson