

HEARING AID TAX CREDIT

ACTION

Ask your members of Congress to cosponsor the Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit (S. 48/H.R. TBD), legislation that would allow for a hearing aid tax credit.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW?

The Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit is legislation that would allow for an income tax credit for the purchase of hearing aids. Members of Congress are encouraged to support this important legislation, which would provide for a tax credit of \$500 per hearing aid every 5 years. This legislation has received strong bipartisan support in the past. It is meant to offer assistance to those who have the greatest need for these devices, but are unable to afford them.

WHAT YOU NEED TO SAY?

- Hearing aids are not covered under Medicare or under the vast majority of state-mandated benefits.
- Some private health care plans cover the cost of audiologic tests, a hearing aid evaluation, and even partial or full coverage of a hearing aid.
- Medicaid differs by state in the coverage offered for hearing aids.
- The National Institute of Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) estimates that 28.8 million adults in the United States could benefit from hearing aids. Among adults aged 70 and older with hearing loss who could benefit from hearing aids, fewer than one in three (30%) has ever used them. Even fewer adults aged 20 to 69 (approximately 16%) who could benefit from wearing hearing aids have never used them.
- There are many kinds of hearing aid technologies currently available, from simple and lesser expensive circuitry to complex and expensive digital devices that require sophisticated fitting procedures. The average price of a digital hearing aid is about \$1,500, with top-of-the-line devices costing \$3,000–\$5,000. (NIDCD, 2013)
- This legislation is not intended to cover the full cost of hearing aids, but to provide some measure of financial assistance to the groups who are most in need of these devices, but are unable to afford them—in particular, those approaching or in retirement and families with children who need the devices.

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