



October 18, 2013

The Honorable Matt Cartwright
1419 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Cartwright:

On behalf of the Hearing Loss Association of America and the nearly 48 million Americans with hearing loss, I write to express our support for the Help Extend Auditory Relief Act of 2013.

The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) is the nation's leading organization representing people with hearing loss. HLAA provides assistance and resources for people with hearing loss and their families to learn how to adjust to living with hearing loss. HLAA is working to eradicate the stigma associated with hearing loss and raise public awareness about the need for prevention, treatment, and regular hearing screenings throughout life.

Nearly 17% of all Americans report a hearing loss, including a third of all individuals over the age of 65. Hearing loss is not a benign condition: recent studies reveal a linkage between untreated hearing loss and dementia, a greater incidence of balance problems and falls, and greater incidence of stress-related diseases like diabetes and heart disease.

Currently, Medicare Part B only covers hearing rehabilitation services for cases caused by an illness or accident. Progressive, age-related hearing loss is not covered, leaving many seniors to pay for their own hearing exams and hearing aids. Hearing aids are incredibly expensive, ranging from \$600 to over \$5,000 each. These high price tags discourage many seniors from seeking a very basic solution that could dramatically improve their lives.

The Help Extend Auditory Relief Act of 2013 would help American's seniors by amending the Social Security Act to include Medicare coverage for hearing rehabilitation, including hearing tests and hearing aids.

Please feel free to contact me or my staff for any assistance at 301-657-2248. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna Gilmore Hall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anna Gilmore Hall
Executive Director