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This is a weekly report from the HLAA national office in Bethesda, Maryland. Please also [sign up](#) for the online HLAA e-News where even more news is published.

ADVOCACY

It's a Call to Action! Join HLAA in Supporting the Over-the-Counter Hearing Aid Act of 2017

On March 21, U.S. Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), Maggie Hassan (D-N.H.), and Johnny Isakson (R-Ga.), [reintroduced legislation](#) (S. 670) to make hearing aids for those with mild to moderate hearing loss available over the counter (OTC). A companion bill (HR 1652) led by Representatives Joe Kennedy III (D-Mass.) and Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.) was also introduced in the House.

The Over-the-Counter Hearing Aid Act of 2017 would make certain types of hearing aids available over the counter and remove unnecessary and burdensome requirements that currently create barriers for consumers who could benefit from hearing aids.

HLAA is issuing a **Call to Action** to ask for your help in sending Congress a message that passage of this bill would be life-changing for the millions of Americans who don't seek help for their hearing loss simply because they can't afford to. You – we – now have the opportunity to influence Congress to change that. We have created a [new section of the HLAA website](#) entirely devoted to over-the-counter hearing aids. It includes information on what exactly an over-the-counter device is, what all this means to people with hearing loss, the NAS report, information on the [Call to Action](#) – what you can do to help, useful links and much more.

Senator Warren Discusses Over-the-Counter Hearing Aids with the FDA

On the heels of the reintroduction of the Over-the-Counter Hearing Aid Act of 2017, Senator Warren discussed the legislation, what it means to people with hearing loss, and posed some questions to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regarding over-the-counter hearing aids. Senator Warren has made some compelling arguments during the discussion, which took place at a hearing of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) on Tuesday, March 22. You can watch a captioned video of the presentation [here](#).



CHAPTERS

HLAA Presents Chapter Building Workshops in Portland and St. Louis

Earlier this month, HLAA Director of Chapter Development Valerie Stafford-Mallis and National Chapter Coordinator Erin Mirante had the opportunity to travel to Portland, Oregon and St. Louis, Missouri to hold chapter building workshops for local chapters and state associations. The HLAA Chapter Building Workshop is an all-day program designed to give chapter leaders ideas for attracting new members, recruiting volunteers, raising funds, attracting younger members, and connecting the chapters to their local communities. During the visit, Valerie and Erin had the opportunity to speak with chapter and state leaders about all of these topics and many more.

Events like these workshops are fundamental to communication between the national office and chapters. Each chapter is unique, with varying needs and requirements, and workshops like these are an opportunity to help understand how HLAA can best support chapters. They always prove to be extremely helpful for chapter and state leaders and HLAA staff alike. A big thank you to all chapters involved! We truly appreciate letting us hear your cares, concerns, successes, and more. For additional information on chapter workshops, please reach out to Erin at chapters@hearingloss.org.

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

As you are probably aware, bringing up the topic of hearing loss with a friend or loved one can be very difficult. In partnership with HLAA and the [National Alliance for Caregiving](#), [CaptionCall](#) has developed a new Hearing Loss Conversation Kit to help people learn how to approach the subject with loved ones and where to start treatment. The kit can be downloaded [here](#).

