

The Place for Better Hearing Supports a Federal Hearing Aid Tax Credit

Audiologists Dr. Laurie DeWine and Stefanie Godbey of *The Place for Better Hearing* and The Better Hearing Institute (BHI) support the Hearing Aid Tax Credit that has been reintroduced in both the House of Representatives (H.R. 1646) and the Senate (S. 1019). Either bill would allow an individual who purchased a hearing aid to receive a \$500 tax credit per hearing aid once every five years. The House bill, however, limits access to the tax credit to children and individuals over the age of 55 whose income does not exceed \$200,000. The Senate version is inclusive to all individuals, regardless of age or income.

“Our effort is grounded in the sad fact that although 95% of people with hearing loss could be successfully treated with hearing aids, fewer than 23% of such Americans (7.38 million people) currently use them,” said Dr. DeWine. “That’s tragic, and we as a nation must do better.”

“Nearly 2 out of 3 adults with hearing loss cite financial constraints as a core reason they do not wear hearing aids,” said DeWine. “With the hearing aid assistance tax credit, boomers, seniors and parents of children would have the financial boost they need to get their hearing loss treated. These people are the reason Congress needs to step up and take action.”

The hearing aid assistance tax credit has won the bipartisan support of over 100 Senators and Representatives and, in an unprecedented fashion, organizations representing hearing health professionals, consumers, educators, providers and manufacturers. Endorsing organizations include: American Academy of Audiology, American Speech Language Hearing Association, Hearing Loss Association of America (formerly SHHH), and A.G. Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

“Many people are surprised that their health insurance does not cover the cost of a hearing aid, even Medicare. Medicare will not pay for hearing aids nor will they pay for a hearing test for the sole purpose of purchasing a hearing aid,” said Ms. Godbey. “This tax credit will help relieve some of the financial burden patient’s face when purchasing a hearing aid.”

Supporters of the hearing aid tax credit- whether an individual with a hearing loss or a friend or family member of someone with a hearing loss- are encouraged to visit www.hearingaidtaxcredit.org, to contact their elected officials in support of this legislation. Additional information is available from *The Place for Better Hearing* at 922-0123.