



STATE OF DELAWARE
STATE COUNCIL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
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August 19, 2010

The Honorable Michael N. Castle
1233 Longworth House Building
Washington D.C. 20515

RE: Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit Act [H.R. 1646]

Dear Congressman Castle:

I write on behalf of the State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) to encourage you to endorse and become a co-sponsor of the Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit Act. H.R. 1646 amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow a nonrefundable income tax credit of up to \$500 for the purchase of a qualified hearing aid for an individual who is either: (1) age 55 or older; or (2) is claimed as a dependent of the taxpayer. It also denies such tax credit to any taxpayer whose modified adjusted gross income exceeds \$200,000.

SCPD endorses the proposed legislation since one in every ten Americans has a hearing loss. As baby boomers reach retirement age starting in 2010, this number is expected to rapidly climb and nearly double by the year 2030. In addition, the prevalence of hearing loss increases with age, up to 1 in 3 over age 65. Most hearing losses develop over a period of 25 to 30 years. Also, among seniors, hearing loss is the third most prevalent, but treatable disabling condition, behind arthritis and hypertension. Finally, while the vast majority of Americans (95%) with hearing loss could be successfully treated with hearing aids, only 25 % (6.35 million individuals) currently use them. Only 5% of hearing loss in adults can be improved through medical or surgical treatment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Daniese McMullin-Powell' with a circled 'D' at the end.

Daniese McMullin-Powell, Chairperson
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

Cc: Council on Deaf & Hard of Hearing Equality
Developmental Disabilities Council
Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens