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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 50 Session of  
2021

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INTRODUCED BY HANBIDGE, HOHENSTEIN, SANCHEZ, ISAACSON, McNEILL,  
HILL-EVANS, GUENST, SCHLOSSBERG, N. NELSON, NEILSON, CIRESI,  
KINKEAD, WEBSTER, MALAGARI, BRIGGS AND DELLOSO,  
FEBRUARY 10, 2021

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON INSURANCE, FEBRUARY 10, 2021

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A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Congress of the United States to expand Medicare to  
2 include coverage of hearing aids.

3 WHEREAS, Medicare is a Federal health insurance program for:

4 (1) Individuals 65 years of age or older.

5 (2) Individuals younger than 65 years of age who have  
6 certain disabilities.

7 (3) Individuals of all ages who have end-stage renal  
8 disease;

9 and

10 WHEREAS, Medicare consists of four parts:

11 (1) Medicare Part A, which provides hospital insurance.

12 (2) Medicare Part B, which provides medical insurance.

13 (3) Medicare Part C, which is popularly known as  
14 "Medicare Advantage," and is a type of Medicare health plan  
15 offered by a private company that includes benefits from  
16 Medicare Parts A and B and that usually includes benefits  
17 from Medicare Part D.

1 (4) Medicare Part D, which provides prescription drug  
2 coverage;

3 and

4 WHEREAS, The Medicare program was signed into law on July 30,  
5 1965; and

6 WHEREAS, More than 2.5 million Americans received hospital  
7 care covered by Medicare in the first six months of the program;  
8 and

9 WHEREAS, More than 62.9 million Americans, including more  
10 than 2.78 million residents of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,  
11 were enrolled in Medicare as of October 2020; and

12 WHEREAS, Medicare does not cover hearing exams, hearing aids  
13 or exams for fitting hearing aids, and only Medicare Part B  
14 covers diagnostic hearing and balance exams if ordered by a  
15 doctor to determine the necessity of medical treatment; and

16 WHEREAS, There are three types of hearing loss:

17 (1) Conductive hearing loss, which involves the outer or  
18 middle ear.

19 (2) Sensorineural hearing loss, which involves the inner  
20 ear.

21 (3) Mixed hearing loss, which involves a combination of  
22 conductive and sensorineural hearing loss;

23 and

24 WHEREAS, There are four degrees of hearing loss, including  
25 mild, moderate, severe and profound hearing loss, all of which  
26 can impact an individual's work, social life and personal life;  
27 and

28 WHEREAS, While hearing loss can occur at any age, it affects  
29 an estimated 48 million Americans 12 years of age or older; and

30 WHEREAS, Hearing aids can greatly improve the quality of life

1 of an individual with hearing loss; and

2 WHEREAS, States cannot expand Medicare coverage to include  
3 hearing aids as Medicare is a Federal program; therefore be it

4 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the  
5 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Congress of the United  
6 States to expand Medicare to include coverage of hearing aids;  
7 and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to  
9 the presiding officers of each house of Congress and each member  
10 of Congress from Pennsylvania.