

Phillip Sherman
42 Wallaby Way
Marion, AL 36756

November 8, 2016

The Honorable Terri Sewell
United States House of Representatives
1133 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Sewell,

I am one of your constituents and a doctor of audiology (AuD) student at Howard College. I am writing in regards to HB 1882.

The Hearing Aid Tax Credit Act (HB 1882) is a bill that seeks to provide a tax credit of up to \$500 per device for citizens in need of hearing aids, regardless of age. Hearing loss affects approximately 48 million Americans and, unfortunately, most insurance plans do not offer full coverage for technology or professional audiological services. In addition to older adults suffering from age-related hearing loss, this legislation would benefit the hundreds of children diagnosed with hearing loss in the United States every year. Studies have indicated that the use of hearing aids by individuals with hearing impairments improves quality of life and reduces the societal costs of caring for these individuals. Lack of payment assistance for hearing aids is known to be a factor in the low rate of ownership and use of these devices. I believe this tax credit is an excellent start to easing the financial burden of hearing assistive technology for more individuals living with hearing loss.

As a future audiologist, this issue is important to me as I see the substantial benefits that hearing aids can provide to patients on a daily basis. Additionally, my grandfather obtained hearing aids last year. Already my family has witnessed a positive transformation as he is engaging with family members again and beginning to reestablish his once-vibrant social life.

I encourage your support on this issue and hope that you will continue to work with the hearing health community on additional coverage options for hearing aids. If you have questions or would like more information on this important legislation (or the field of audiology), please contact me or reach out to the American Academy of Audiology (AAA). The AAA's director of government relations, Kate Thomas, is available at 703-226-1029 or kthomas@audiology.org.

I look forward to hearing your views on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Phillip Sherman