A RESOLUTION

Urging the Congress of the United States to take action on legislation that would expand Medicare coverage to include hearing aids.

WHEREAS, Medicare is a Federal health insurance program for:

1. Individuals 65 years of age or older.
2. Individuals younger than 65 years of age who have certain disabilities.
3. Individuals of all ages who have end-stage renal disease;

and

WHEREAS, Medicare consists of four parts:

1. Medicare Part A, which provides hospital insurance.
2. Medicare Part B, which provides medical insurance.
3. Medicare Part C, which is also known as "Medicare Advantage" and is a type of Medicare health plan offered by a private company that includes benefits from Medicare Parts A and B and that usually includes benefits from Medicare Part
D.

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

and

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

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

WHEREAS, More than 60 million Americans, including more than 2.7 million residents of this Commonwealth, were enrolled in Medicare as of March 2019; and

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

WHEREAS, There are three types of hearing loss:

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

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

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

and

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

WHEREAS, While hearing loss can occur at any age, it affects an estimated 48 million Americans 12 years of age and older; and
WHEREAS, Hearing aids can greatly improve the quality of life of an individual with hearing loss; and
WHEREAS, States cannot expand Medicare coverage to include hearing aids as it is a Federal program; and
WHEREAS, Several pieces of legislation have been introduced in the Congress of the United States that would expand Medicare coverage to include hearing aids; therefore be it
RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Congress of the United States to take action on legislation that would expand Medicare to include coverage of hearing aids; and be it further
RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the presiding officers of each house of Congress and to each member of Congress from Pennsylvania.