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Operations Committee

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Health Occupations and  
Long Term Care

Public Health and  
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Rules and Executive  
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Harford County House Delegation



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**THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES**  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB1339-Health Insurance -Hearing Aids for Adults – Coverage**

**March 5, 2024**

Chairman Pena-Melnyk and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee:

This is a familiar bill to this committee that I first introduced in 2023. At that time, it was suggested that we request a cost estimate study from the Maryland Health Care Commission on providing health insurance coverage for hearing aids for adults. The report was completed on January 6, 2024, which identified the main reasons for patients with hearing loss not using hearing aids can be attributed to the high cost of hearing aids, underestimation of the importance of hearing health, lack of awareness about how to get hearing tested or acquire hearing aids, being uninsured, and accessibility challenges, particularly in rural areas.

HB1339 as amended, will establish that carriers on the Maryland Benefits Exchange shall provide coverage for all medically appropriate and necessary hearing aids for an adult who is covered under a policy or contract if the hearing aids are prescribed, fitted, and dispensed by a licensed audiologist and is limited to \$1,400 per hearing aid for each hearing-impaired ear every 36 months.

The bill would also allow an insured member the flexibility to purchase a more expensive hearing aid by paying the additional cost themselves without any penalty to the hearing aid provider.

Passage of this bill would increase access to hearing aids for the adult population that is affected by hearing impairment. Loss of hearing increases risks to both physical and mental health outcomes, which drive up medical costs for individuals and claim costs for insurance providers.

HB1339 is cross-filed with SB778.

I respectfully ask for a FAVORABLE report as amendment.

Sincerely,

Delegate Teresa E. Reilly