

Lise Hamlin
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Germantown, MD 20874

Delegate Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair
Delegate Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair
Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: H B 910, Health Insurance – Hearing Aids for Adults – Coverage

Dear Delegate Shane E. Pendergrass, Delegate Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee:

I write in support of HB 910, H B 910, Health Insurance – Hearing Aids for Adults – Coverage.

I have been living with a significant hearing loss for over 35 years. I acquired my hearing loss literally overnight in my 30s. Hearing aids allowed me to hold down a job, to raise my two sons, and to participate in the community. I have been lucky enough to be able work and to cover the cost of the hearing aids I have. But it has always been an out-of-pocket expense for me. It was always a matter of juggling the costs of hearing aids with other family needs: home, car, schooling, other health care costs and well, eating too!

Many people with hearing loss do not have the resources needed to purchase a set of hearing aids with an average cost of \$4,000 a pair, up to \$8000 a pair.

In 2008 I joined the staff of Hearing Loss Association of America. We hear literally every day from people struggling to pay for hearing aids, not knowing where to turn. There are precious few places to turn when you cannot afford hearing aids, so there is little hope we can give them, unless they live in a state that mandates health insurance coverage.

HB 910 would help adults with hearing loss living in Maryland manage the cost of hearing aids. While the \$750 cap would not cover the entire cost the hearing aid, it is still a huge help and very much needed, particularly now when so many people's livelihood has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

I urge you to support HB 910.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lise Hamlin". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Lise Hamlin