

TERESA E. REILLY
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Cecil and Harford Counties

DEPUTY MINORITY WHIP

Health and Government
Operations Committee

Subcommittees

Health Occupations and
Long Term Care

Public Health and
Minority Health Disparities

Rules and Executive
Nominations Committee

Chair

Harford County House Delegation



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SB778-Health Insurance -Hearing Aids for Adults – Coverage

March 19, 2024

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

SB778 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 with any penalty to the hearing aid provider.

Passage of this bill would increase access to hearing aids for over 15% of the American 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.

SB778 is cross-filed with HB1339.

I respectfully ask for a FAVORABLE report as amended from the Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Teresa E. Reilly".

Delegate Teresa E. Reilly

District 35A

Cecil and Harford Counties