
MARYLAND SOCIETY OF OTOLARYNGOLOGISTS

SUBJECT: House Bill 910 - Health Insurance – Hearing Aids for Adults – Coverage

COMMITTEE: House Health and Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Shane Pendergrass, Chair

DATE: Thursday, February 25, 2021

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Society of Otolaryngologists (MSO) represents more than 300 physicians who live and practice in Maryland. Otolaryngologists are physicians who treat the ear, nose, throat, and related structures of the head and neck; most commonly referred to as ear, nose, and throat specialists (ENTs). The medical disorders treated by our physicians are among the most common that afflict all Americans, young and old. They include chronic ear infection, sinusitis, snoring and sleep apnea, hearing loss, allergies and hay fever, swallowing disorders, nosebleeds, hoarseness, dizziness, and head and neck cancer. Otorhinolaryngologists diagnose and treat disorders of the ears, nose, throat, and related structures of the head and neck. Our foremost commitment is to deliver the best patient care.

House Bill 910 as introduced *“Requires insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and health maintenance organizations that provide certain health insurance benefits under certain insurance policies or contracts to provide coverage for all medically appropriate and necessary hearing aids for adults covered under the policies or contracts; authorizes insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and health maintenance organizations to limit the benefit payable under the Act to \$750 per hearing aid for each hearing-impaired ear every 36 months.”*

House Bill 910 expands important existing provisions in law for minors to adults. 80% of those who should be wearing a hearing aid do not, often because of economic obstacles. With the recently proven link between dementia, cognitive decline, and hearing loss, it is imperative to get more patients access to the technology.

Far too often policy constraints and coverage limitations impact a patient’s decision making and impacts the choice of devices. This bill can help patients overcome these obstacles and feel comfortable that they can access the hearing technology that best fits their needs.

The MSO appreciates efforts to increase access to care and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report on House Bill 910.

For further information please contact:

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