

HOUSE No. 2239

By Mr. Scibak of South Hadley, petition of John W. Scibak and others that hearing aids be included in coverage under health insurance plans. Public Health.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PETITION OF:

John W. Scibak	Thomas P. Kennedy
Gerald D. DiFranza	Susan C. Tucker
Mary E. Grant	Geraldo Alicea
Tom Sannicandro	Christine E. Canavan
John P. Fresolo	Ellen Story
Michael F. Rush	Barbara A. L'Italien
Theodore C. Speliotis	Walter F. Timilty
Peter V. Kocot	

In the Year Two Thousand and Seven.

AN ACT TO PROVIDE COVERAGE FOR HEARING AIDS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

- 1 Chapter 118E of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2004
- 2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 9C
- 3 the following section:—
- 4 Section 9D.(a) Definitions. As used in the section:
- 5 (i) “Hearing Aid” shall mean any wearable, non-disposable
- 6 instrument or device designed to aid or compensate for impaired
- 7 or diminished human hearing; and any part, attachments, or acces-
- 8 sories including earmolds but excluding batteries. In the event
- 9 that any part of this definition conflicts with the definition of a
- 10 hearing aid in section 196 of chapter 112 of the General Laws,
- 11 this definition will take precedent for the purposes of this section.
- 12 (ii) “Related services” shall mean those services necessary to
- 13 assess, select, and appropriately adjust or fit the hearing aid to
- 14 ensure optimal performance.

15 (b) A health benefit plan shall provide coverage, subject to all
16 applicable co-payments, coinsurance, deductibles, and out-of-
17 pocket limits, for the full cost of one hearing aid per hearing
18 impaired ear, every 36 months for insured individuals, and all
19 related services which shall be prescribed by an audiologist or a
20 hearing instrument specialist as defined in section 196 of
21 chapter 12 of the General Laws, and dispensed by an audiologist
22 or a hearing instrument specialist as defined in said section.

23 (c) A health benefit plan shall not be required to pay a claim
24 filed by its insured for payment of the cost of a hearing aid under
25 the coverage required by subsection (2) of this section if less than
26 3 years prior to the date of the claim its insured filed a claim for
27 payment of cost of a hearing aid under the required coverage and
28 the claim was paid by any health benefit plan.