



## **Joint Statement of Support for the Medicare Audiologist Access and Services Act of 2019**

*AAA, ADA, and ASHA lead efforts to help seniors with their hearing health care needs*

On July 25, 2019, U.S. Representatives Tom Rice (R-SC), Matt Cartwright (D-PA), Mark Meadows (R-NC), Ralph Norman (R-SC), Mike Kelly (R-PA), Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), Brad Schneider (D-IL), Ann Kuster (D-NH), Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), and Lisa Blunt-Rochester (D-DE) introduced the Medicare Audiologist Access and Services Act of 2019 ([H.R. 4056](#)). This legislation will enhance the Medicare benefit by providing beneficiaries critical direct access to both diagnostic and therapeutic services of audiologists. The bill is endorsed by the American Academy of Audiology (AAA), the Academy of Doctors of Audiology (ADA), the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), and the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA). Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Rand Paul (R-KY) plan to introduce imminently a Senate companion bill.

The Medicare Audiologist Access and Services Act of 2019 ([H.R. 4056](#)) will remove unnecessary barriers, allowing patients to receive appropriate, timely, and cost-effective audiologic care. This legislation can improve outcomes for beneficiaries by allowing direct access to audiologic services and streamlining Medicare coverage policies so that audiologists can provide the full range of Medicare-covered diagnostic and treatment services that correspond to their scope of practice. The legislation would also reclassify audiologists as practitioners, which is consistent with the way Medicare recognizes other non-physician providers, such as clinical psychologists, clinical social workers, and advanced practice registered nurses.

Earlier this year, AAA, ADA, and ASHA agreed to join forces to develop legislation that expands access to and coverage of audiology services under Medicare and recognized the importance of agreeing on a unified approach. For Medicare beneficiaries who need hearing and balance health care services, it is critical that audiology services be positioned to support evidence-based care and for the full scope of practice for audiologists be appropriately recognized.

For more information, visit:

American Academy of Audiology at [www.audiology.org](http://www.audiology.org)

Academy of Doctors of Audiology at [www.audiologist.org](http://www.audiologist.org)

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association at [www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org)