



180 PENNSYLVANIANS GATHER TO THANK REP. ALLYSON SCHWARTZ FOR HER SUPPORT OF THE HEARING AID TAX CREDIT

March 28, 2009, Fort Washington, PA: A record crowd of 180 Philadelphia area residents gathered this past Saturday in Fort Washington, Pennsylvania, to demonstrate their support for the Hearing Aid Tax Credit (HR 1646) and to thank Rep. Allyson Schwartz (D-PA) for her original co-sponsorship of the bill. The event was hosted by the Pennsylvania chapters of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) and the A.G. Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (AG Bell) with support from the Pennsylvania chapter of the International Hearing Society (IHS), and Hearing Industries Association (HIA).

The program, moderated by HLAA member Carolyn Meyer, included moving stories of living with hearing loss by local residents Sunny Loigman, Rod Ryan, and Don Groff, who emphasized the difficulties related to the lack of financial assistance when seeking hearing aid treatment. A group of children who had attended the Clarke Pennsylvania Auditory Oral Center in Bryn Mawr, PA, opened the program by leading the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

In her comments, Rep. Schwartz noted that healthcare reform is an important part of the Congressional agenda this year, and she added that this would provide a good opportunity to enact the hearing aid tax credit. Rep. Schwartz, known as a healthcare expert, is one of 10 House Ways and Means Committee members who have co-sponsored the legislation – a record amount of support from the Committee that has jurisdiction over the legislation. As a member of the Pennsylvania Senate from 1990 to 2004, Rep. Schwartz was a leader on healthcare issues. Her efforts there led to the creation of the Children's Health Insurance Program in 1992 which served as the model for the federal plan that provides insurance to millions of children.

The Philadelphia area brunch was the latest in a series of grassroots initiatives in support of the hearing aid tax credit sponsored by HIA in partnership with HLAA, AG Bell and IHS. The largest previous attendance was 130 people for events in Maryland and Michigan. Other successful events have been held in California, Nevada, Texas and Western Pennsylvania.

To learn more about the Hearing Aid Tax Credit, visit:

<http://www.hearingloss.org/advocacy/legislative.asp>. If you are interested in writing letters to your Representatives in Congress, visit: <http://www.hearingaidtaxcredit.org>