



The Honorable Mike Ross

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Ross:

On behalf of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), the foremost consumer organization for people with hearing loss in the United States, I thank you for your leadership in introducing the Medicare Hearing Health Care Enhancement Act of 2007 (HR 1665). The Hearing Loss Association of America supports this important legislation.

Medicare beneficiaries with hearing loss would benefit from the option that allows them to see either a physician or an audiologist first for their hearing health needs. This bill would give consumers choice and therefore improve access to hearing care for Medicare beneficiaries without diminishing the important role of medical doctors, or expanding the scope of practice for audiology. The legislation would also bring Medicare into line with the policies of other Federal health programs, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program, administered by the Office of Personnel Management, and many private health plans that allow participants in their respective health care programs direct access to audiologists.

Thank you for your dedication to expanding access for consumers to hearing health as demonstrated by this proposed legislation. The HLAA appreciates the opportunity to work with you to promote this important initiative in the 110th Congress. Again, we thank you for being the champion of hearing health and for your dedication to the needs of individuals with hearing loss.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry D. Portis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Terry D. Portis, Ed.D.
Executive Director