

By Brenda Battat



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From the Executive Director's Desk

On September 12-13, 2011, the *World Report on Disability*, jointly produced by the World Health Organization and the World Bank Group, was launched in Washington, D.C. The report provides a better understanding of disability and its impact on individuals and society highlighting the attitudinal, physical and financial barriers that people with disabilities face no matter where they live in the world. There are one billion people with disabilities worldwide—yes, one billion—who face similar difficulties accessing services for health, education, employment and transportation.

Professor Adrian Davis, of the British MRC Institute of Hearing Research, estimates that the total number of people with hearing loss of greater than 25 dB will exceed 700 million worldwide by 2015. The report suggests steps for stakeholders to create enabling environments, develop rehabilitation and support services, ensure adequate social protection, create inclusive policies and programs and enforce new and existing standards and legislation. The report will bring to the attention of governments and the public the impact of disability based on the best available scientific information recommendations for action at the local, national and international levels.

As Professor Stephen W. Hawking, the world renowned astrophysicist notes in his foreword to the report, "It is my hope that, beginning with the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, and now with the publication of the *World Report on Disability*, this century will mark a turning point for inclusion of people with disabilities in the lives of their societies." It's an encouraging way to finish up this year and renew our resolve at HLAA to continue our work so that people with hearing loss can live well.

From the staff of HLAA we wish all of our readers a very happy holiday season and a new year of expanded horizons. 🎉

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What does membership in HLAA mean?

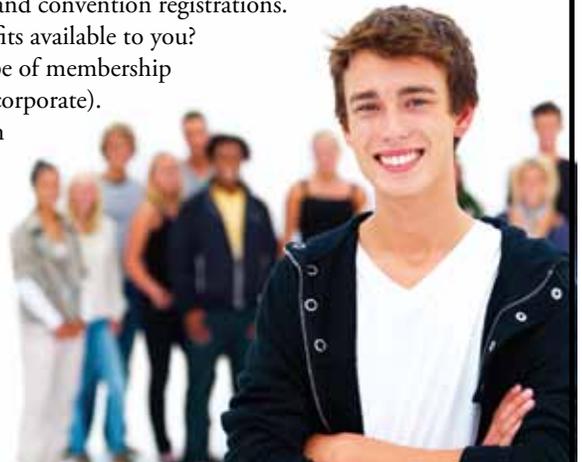
It means that dues-paying members are represented by the HLAA National Office to Congress, the Federal Communications Commission, the White House, and other policy-making agencies.

In *Hearing Loss Magazine*, members learn about these initiatives affecting people with hearing loss, read cutting-edge information about technology, personal stories, and more. HLAA members have many other benefits such as discounts on hearing aids, merchandise, car rentals, and convention registrations.

Do you know all the benefits available to you? Check the benefits for your type of membership (e.g., individual, professional, corporate).

Did you know that the label on your *Hearing Loss Magazine* has your member ID number and membership renewal date?

If you are not already a member, join today at www.hearingloss.org. Together, we will make hearing loss an issue of national concern.



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