



International Hearing Society

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Michigan Hearing Health Statistics

1.8 million Michigan residents have some degree of hearing loss, which is approximately 10% of the state population.



27% of all Michigan households include an individual with some hearing loss according to the MarkeTrak report, the largest national consumer survey on hearing loss in America.



Michigan residents purchased 81,854 hearing aids in 2005 according to the Hearing Industries Association Statistical Reporting Program of hearing aid sales in the United States.



59% of hearing aid owners have a household income of \$40,000 a year or less, according to figures published in the MarkeTrak report.

Dear Legislator:

We are extremely pleased with the recent passage of MI S.403, the Hearing Aid Tax Credit Bill, by the Michigan Senate and are seeking your support to continue the momentum. Senate Bill 403 would provide a non-refundable tax credit of up to \$1,500 for the purchase of a hearing aid to qualified taxpayers over 60 years old with a household income of less than \$100,000, or for the taxpayer's spouse or dependent.

Hearing impairment affects over 1 million Michiganders however most cannot afford hearing aids to improve their hearing health. The average cost for a hearing aid is \$1,601 and with more severe hearing loss the cost could exceed \$7,000 - \$8,000 per pair according to the MarkeTrak VIII survey. Unfortunately for many, third-party payment for hearing aids is decreasing, or as with Medicaid, is being eliminated altogether. Untreated hearing loss can adversely affect work performance, relationships with friends and family, and ultimately compromise quality of life. The passage of this bill would ease the financial burden on individuals seeking hearing assistance technology.

We are asking your support of S403 and encouraging you to reach out to Rep. Kate Ebli, chair of the Tax Policy Committee, to urge her to schedule a hearing for S403. Rep. Ebli can be reached at 888.325.4056 or kateebli@house.mi.gov. With our combined efforts and support of this much-needed tax credit, our fellow Michiganders have a better chance of improving their hearing, and their quality of life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathleen Mennillo'.

Kathleen Mennillo, MBA
Executive Director
International Hearing Society