



## Congress: Can You Hear Me?

(NAPSA)—*Thirty million Americans suffer from hearing loss and too many of them cannot afford the hearing aids that would improve their job security and their lives.*

Lack of health insurance coverage for essential hearing devices and treatment poses significant problems for people with hearing loss. Hearing your best is critical to succeeding in or re-entering today's challenging workforce.

Excellent listening skills are ranked high by employers as desirable job attributes. Fully 73 percent of employers surveyed by ACT, a leading college and workforce planning organization, ranked listening an "extremely important" job skill.

With today's down economy, many boomers and seniors either need to postpone retirement or return to work. Sixty percent of workers over the age of 60 are postponing retirement due to the impact of the financial crisis on their long-term savings, according to a recent CareerBuilder/USA Today national survey of employers.

That's why the Better Hearing Institute works to pass the Hearing Aid Tax Credit, H.R. 1646 and S. 1019. They provide a \$500 tax credit per hearing aid once every five years for adults and dependents.

### Four Reasons to Support the Hearing Aid Tax Credit

- **Loss of income.** A study by the Institute found that people with untreated hearing loss lose up to \$23,000 a year in income depending on degree of hearing loss; that's \$122 billion a year.

- **It's good for taxpayers.** Due to underperformance on the job, people with untreated hearing loss contribute \$18 billion less in federal taxes than they could if they were able to hear effectively on the job.



**Most medical insurance doesn't pay for hearing aids. New legislation aims to remedy this.**

- **Equal access to hearing health care.** Hearing aids are not covered under Medicare or by insurance programs. The overwhelming majority of hearing aids are paid for entirely by the patient. Two out of three adults with hearing loss cite financial constraints as a core reason they do not use hearing aids. Thirty-six percent of individuals with hearing loss have incomes of less than \$30,000 per year.

- **Staying competitive in a tough economy.** With older people staying in the workforce longer, it is important that they hear well on the job as well as when they interview for jobs. In this way, the likelihood of their becoming a financial burden to society is diminished.

You can help and join the cause. Visit [www.hearingaidtaxcredit.org](http://www.hearingaidtaxcredit.org) to find out more about this vital legislation and to let Congress know that you want all Americans to get a fair deal. Then spread the word and ask your family and friends to visit this site. And visit frequently to advocate on timely calls to action.