

November 16, 2007

The Honorable Mike Ross
U.S. House of Representatives
314 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0404

Dear Representative Ross,

The Georgia Academy of Audiology would like to thank you for sponsoring the Medicare Hearing Health Care Enhancement Act of 2007 (H.R. 1665). This bill is supportive in promoting hearing health care issues. Our Academy endorses this legislation and appreciates your leadership in this important issue.

Passage of this legislation will enable more Medicare beneficiary's access to quality hearing health care. It is exciting that we are moving forward with a bill that will provide better accessibility for seniors who are in need of hearing and balance assessment and rehabilitation. As you know, this population is under-diagnosed and under-treated. By allowing this population to go directly to an audiologist, hearing loss will be more readily identified and subsequent treatment will result. Furthermore, this bill is cost effective and consistent with other government programs such as the Department of Veterans Affairs which has permitted Veterans direct access to audiologists since 1992, and The Federal Employee Health Benefits Program, which also allows direct access to audiologists.

Our Academy supports this bill and encourages our U.S. Congressmen from Georgia to also cosponsor this very important law that will have such a positive effect for the elderly population's hearing health care needs. On behalf of the Academy, I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation for your continued dedication in improving the hearing health care standards for the hard of hearing population in the United States.

Respectfully,

Jiovanne Hughart, Au.D.
Doctor of Audiology
President, Georgia Academy of Audiology

Pc: Phil Bongiorno, American Academy of Audiology