

109TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 277

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for direct access to audiologists for Medicare beneficiaries, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 3, 2005

Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. DEWINE, and Mr. HARKIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

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## A BILL

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for direct access to audiologists for Medicare beneficiaries, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Hearing Health Acces-  
5 sibility Act of 2005”.

6 **SEC. 2. DIRECT ACCESS TO QUALIFIED AUDIOLOGISTS FOR**  
7 **MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES.**

8 Section 1861(l)(2) of the Social Security Act (42  
9 U.S.C. 1395x(l)(2)) is amended by inserting before the  
10 period at the end the following: “, without regard to any

1 requirement that the individual receiving the audiology  
 2 services be under the care of (or referred by) a physician  
 3 or other health care practitioner or that such services are  
 4 provided under the supervision of a physician or other  
 5 health care practitioner”.

6 **SEC. 3. INCLUSION OF AUDIOLOGY SERVICES AS A PART B**

7 **MEDICAL SERVICE; PAYMENT.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1861(s)(2) of the Social  
 9 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(s)(2)) is amended—

10 (1) in subparagraph (Y), by striking “and” at  
 11 the end;

12 (2) in subparagraph (Z), by inserting “and” at  
 13 the end; and

14 (3) by adding at the end the following new sub-  
 15 paragraph:

16 “(AA) audiology services (as defined in sub-  
 17 section (ll)(2));”.

18 (b) PAYMENT UNDER THE PHYSICIAN FEE SCHED-  
 19 ULE.—Section 1848(j)(3) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-  
 20 4(j)(3)) is amended by inserting “(2)(AA),” after  
 21 “(2)(W),”.

22 **SEC. 4. CONSTRUCTION; EFFECTIVE DATE.**

23 (a) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act shall be  
 24 construed to expand the scope of audiology services for

1 which payment may be made under title XVIII of the So-  
2 cial Security Act on December 31, 2005.

3 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by  
4 this Act shall take effect with respect to services furnished  
5 on or after January 1, 2006.

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