

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.

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

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.

○