



This Week in Bethesda

JUNE 16, 2017

This is a weekly report from the HLAA national office in Bethesda, Maryland. Please also [sign up](#) for the online HLAA e-News where even more news is published.

ACTION ALERT!

Make Your Voice Heard Today – Congress to Vote Soon on Over-the-Counter Hearing Aids!

Sometime in the next few weeks both the Senate and House of Representatives will vote on the [Over-the-Counter Hearing Aid Act of 2017](#) (Senate Bill S. 670; House Bill H.R. 1652), which, if passed, will require the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to create a new category of hearing aids that can be sold over the counter. Over-the-counter hearing aids will reduce the cost of hearing aids to consumers and will also spur innovation and increase competition.

This is one of the most exciting – and hopeful – times we have ever seen in hearing health care. But we need your help more than ever to make it less burdensome and more affordable for people to get help for their hearing loss.

Contact your Senators and Representatives and urge them to support the Over-the-Counter Hearing Aid Act of 2017!

You can find more information, including instructions on how to find your Senators and Representatives and a sample letter you can use, on the [HLAA website](#).

HLAA2017 CONVENTION

It's hard to believe, but HLAA2017 Convention is upon us, kicking off next week, on Wednesday, June 22. Before you head off to beautiful Salt Lake City here are a few things to know!

Get Acquainted Party

Yee-haw! Fetch your boots and get ready to scoot at the wildest Get Acquainted Party in history, hosted by [CaptionCall](#). Western attire is encouraged, but not required. Buses will come callin' for you at 5:40 p.m. at the Convention Center and Little America Hotel. You'll want to bring a state-issued ID if you're planning to bend an elbow at our Saloon. Plan for a bully good time!





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Concessions

Looking for a quick bite to eat without having to leave the Convention Center? There will be a kiosk located in the lobby outside the exhibit halls where you can grab a little something. The concession stand offers paninis, sandwiches, salads, coffee, beverages and snacks.

Pizza with a Purpose FUNdraiser

Enjoy a great meal and support a great cause by visiting the California Pizza Kitchen in Salt Lake City. Dine in, take out, or grab a drink and CPK will donate 20% of your bill to HLAA! All you have to do is present [this flier](#) to your server and they'll do the rest.

Travel Tips

Be sure to bring sunscreen, sunglasses, hats, and lip balm. But while it will be hot outside, the exhibit hall and hotels will be cooler, so be sure to bring a jacket or sweater just in case!

Volunteers

Look out for volunteers at the Salt Lake City International Airport to direct you when you arrive. Whether you are looking for a shuttle, cab or the light rail, our volunteers will be there to guide you. Convention volunteers will be wearing light-up armbands and holding up signs that read "Welcome HLAA2017 Convention Attendees."

HLAA2017 CONVENTION & WALK4HEARING

Join us on Thursday, June 22 at 10 a.m. when HLAA2017 Convention and the Walk4Hearing will come together in Salt Lake City to bring you a "mini" Walk4Hearing event. The 1.5 mile Walk begins at Little America Hotel and will take you on a scenic route along Main Street to Temple Square and ends at the Salt Palace Convention Center, where you can pick up your Convention registration badges, tickets, and more! Walkers will receive a special edition Walk4Hearing t-shirt (limited quantity) and bottled water. Come stretch out your legs and step up for people with hearing loss at this extra special mini-Walk4Hearing!

Mobile captioning will be available for pre-Walk speeches. Visit walk4hearing.org on your mobile device, go to "Walk Day CC" and find "HLAA2017 Convention Walk4Hearing," then click on "View Captions."

We want to send a big shout-out to **IntriCon** and **Hearing Help Express**, who "stepped up" to sponsor this event. Thank you – we couldn't do this without you!





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If you have questions or need ADA accommodations email Ann Rancourt at arancourt@hearingloss.org or call 301.657.2248.

(Note: Convention attendees staying at the Radisson can take the Temple Square TRAX/Light Rail to Courthouse Station to get to Little America Hotel.)

WALK4HEARING

Are You up for the Challenge?

HLAA is kicking off its [#HearingLossChallenge](#) to increase the visibility of hearing loss. Only people with hearing loss know what it's like to live in a world without sounds. With the [#HearingLossChallenge](#) we are giving people a chance to understand what that world is like. At upcoming Walk4Hearing events we will be giving out earplugs to people without hearing loss, allowing them to experience our world firsthand while walking to make a difference. Encourage friends and family at the Walk to take the [#HearingLossChallenge](#)! Earplugs provided by [Cochlear Americas](#) will be handed out at every Walk4Hearing nationwide.

Share your experience on social media with a photo or a video of you taking the challenge! Don't forget to tag [@HLAA](#) [@Walk4Hearing](#) with [#HearingLossChallenge](#)!

Step Up for People with Hearing Loss and Communication Access! Register for a Walk near you at walk4hearing.org and take the [#HearingLossChallenge](#)! It's a great way to experience what it's like for the 48 million people living with hearing loss.

HEARING ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Do You Need Help Beyond Your Hearing Aid or Cochlear Implant?

Use of hearing assistive technology (HAT) is one important way for consumers to live better with hearing loss. However, there is a substantial lack of understanding about available technological solutions. HAT includes assistive listening systems (such as FM, hearing loop systems, and infrared), telecommunications products and services (such as captioned telephones and relay services) and alerting devices (such as alarm clocks and smoke detectors that use loud audio alerts, vibrating receivers and/or flashing lights). There are also equipment distribution programs, state assistive technology programs and other helpful resources that can be beneficial.

The HLAA national office receives many inquiries about HAT, yet has no hearing assistive technology expert on staff available to field those calls. In response to this need, HLAA has created a new service called HAT HELP. Supervised doctoral level audiology students





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from the University of Washington and Gallaudet University are now available to answer your technical assistance questions. Simply write to hat_help@hearingloss.org and you will receive an email response to your question.

ADVOCACY

HLAA Director of Public Policy Lise Hamlin had a busy week – she was there to represent HLAA at three different meetings!

Lise participated in a panel discussion about apps for people with hearing loss at the [M-Enabling Summit](#). The Summit is dedicated to promoting accessible technology for seniors and users of all abilities.

Next up was the semi-annual meeting of [AT&T's Advisory Panel on Access and Aging](#) (AAPAA). AAPAA looks at a wide variety of issues related to accessibility, particularly how it impacts seniors with disabilities.

And last but certainly not least, Lise co-chaired the [Federal Communications Commission's \(FCC's\) Disability Advisory Committee](#) (DAC). The DAC provides a means for stakeholders with interests in disability issues to exchange ideas, facilitate the participation of consumers with disabilities in proceedings before the FCC, and assist the FCC in educating the greater disability community and covered entities on disability-related matters.

MESSAGE FROM HLAA

Today, June 16, marks the final issue of *This Week in Bethesda (TWIB)*. TWIB is being discontinued in preparation for a new, expanded version of our *e-News* publications. Stay tuned, more information on these exciting changes will be coming in July!

