



Missouri House of Representatives

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Missouri House Passes Bill Expanding Access to Hearing Aids and Cochlear Implants for Needy Individuals

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – In an effort to improve healthcare accessibility for Missourians, the Missouri House of Representatives has passed HB 2626, a bill including coverage of hearing aids and cochlear implants under MO HealthNet to all eligible needy persons.

The bill, sponsored by State Representative Cameron Parker, seeks to address the significant barriers faced by individuals with hearing loss in accessing essential treatment.

The Department of Social Services has identified 224,154 Missouri adults who enrolled with MO HealthNet that could be eligible for hearing aid services, with an estimated 7.1% (15,915) of those adults who could qualify for use of these services.

"Many people have hearing problems. They are unable to get the help because they cannot afford it. The \$210 – that is a substantial amount of money if you're on a fixed income or in that situation," Parker, R-Campbell, said.

Representative Parker emphasized the importance of ensuring that all eligible individuals, regardless of their economic status, have access to vital healthcare resources.

"This bill is a crucial step towards ensuring that every Missourian can lead a healthy and fulfilling life," Parker said. "By including coverage for hearing aids and cochlear implants, we are removing barriers to essential healthcare services, enabling these citizens to work, and improving the quality of life for countless individuals across our state."

House Speaker Dean Plocher applauded the effort behind the passage of HB 2626, recognizing the profound impact it will have on the lives of Missouri residents. Speaker Plocher remarked, "Today's vote demonstrates our commitment to prioritizing the health and well-being of all Missourians. By including coverage for hearing aids and cochlear implants, we are taking a

significant stride towards ensuring that healthcare is accessible for a community that has previously been overlooked."

The bill received overwhelming support from both sides of the aisle and is poised to make a positive difference in the lives of those who rely on hearing aids and cochlear implants for essential communication. With its passage in the House, HB 2626 now moves to the Senate for further consideration.

Cameron Bunting Parker, a Republican, represents Dunklin County, the southern portion of Pemiscot County, and southwestern Butler County (District 150) in the Missouri House of Representatives. She was elected to her first two-year term in November 2022. For more information, please contact Rep. Parker's office at 573-751-3629 or via email at Cameron.Parker@House.Mo.Gov.

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