STATE OF NEW YORK

11307

IN ASSEMBLY

May 11, 2026

Introduced by COMMITTEE ON RULES -- (at request of M. of A. Blumencranz) -- read once and referred to the Committee on Consumer Affairs and Protection

AN ACT to amend the general business law, in relation to enhancing hearing aid access, affordability, and innovation for persons ages 62 and older while ensuring quality through free-market-driven reforms

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "golden age hearing access act".

§ 2. Section 798 of the general business law is amended by adding ten new subdivisions 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30 to read as follows:

21. All hearing aid dispensers shall offer products to persons ages sixty-two and older at prices reflecting the best available terms under most-favored nation pricing agreements with manufacturers.

(a) "Most-favored nation pricing" shall mean contractual terms requiring hearing aid manufacturers doing business in New York state to offer their best pricing to persons ages sixty-two and older, ensuring they receive the lowest available prices.

(b) Manufacturers shall certify annually to the secretary compliance with most-favored nation pricing provisions.

(c) Dispensers and manufacturers shall disclose pricing and cost structures to the division of consumer protection for public review. Proprietary information shall remain confidential, but summary data shall be published for persons ages sixty-two and older's awareness.

(d) A fine of up to ten thousand dollars per violation for manufacturers or dispensers found in breach of most-favored nation pricing provisions. Suspension or revocation of licenses for repeat offenders.

22. Hearing aid dispensers may utilize third-party services for audiometric testing, provided the third-party complies with state standards. Dispensers shall disclose to persons ages sixty-two and older the option to seek independent audiometric testing.

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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23. A regulatory sandbox shall allow hearing aid dispensers to pilot innovative service models with safeguards for persons ages sixty-two and older, resulting in a reduction of bureaucratic requirements for entry-level dispensers to encourage competition.

24. Hearing aid dispensers may use telehealth platforms for consultations and fittings, provided they comply with privacy standards. Persons ages sixty-two and older shall be informed of telehealth options and in-person alternatives.

25. The requirement for a physical office location for dispensers shall be reviewed biennially and repealed if deemed unnecessary due to advances in telehealth.

26. The division of consumer protection shall maintain a public database of dispensers and their compliance records. A "Hearing Aid Consumer Rights Handbook" shall be distributed to all prospective users ages sixty-two and older, outlining their rights under state law.

27. Hearing aid dispensers and manufacturers implementing cost-reduction programs for persons ages sixty-two and older will qualify for state tax credits equivalent to five percent of their program expenditures, capped at one million dollars annually per entity.

28. Persons ages sixty-two and older purchasing hearing aids may claim a state income tax deduction of up to two thousand five hundred dollars annually per hearing aid device.

29. A five million dollar annual grant program shall be established for small businesses developing innovative hearing aid technologies. Priority shall be given to proposals that demonstrate scalability, technological innovation, reliance on New York state economy, and cost reductions for persons ages sixty-two and older.

30. The secretary shall submit an annual report to the governor and the legislature on the effectiveness of the reforms, including compliance rates, cost savings, and persons ages sixty-two and older satisfaction metrics.

§ 3. Severability clause. If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part of this act shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgement shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such judgement shall have been rendered. It is hereby declared to be the intent of the legislature that this act would have been enacted even if such invalid provisions has not been included.

§ 4. This act shall take effect immediately.