

**AMENDMENT TO H.R. 5620**  
**OFFERED BY MR. DUFFY OF WISCONSIN**

Page 54, after line 2, insert the following:

1 **SEC. 11. APPOINTMENT OF LICENSED HEARING AID SPE-**  
2 **CIALISTS IN VETERANS HEALTH ADMINIS-**  
3 **TRATION.**

4 (a) LICENSED HEARING AID SPECIALISTS.—

5 (1) APPOINTMENT.—Section 7401(3) of title  
6 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting “li-  
7 censed hearing aid specialists,” after “Audiol-  
8 ogists,”.

9 (2) QUALIFICATIONS.—Section 7402(b)(14) of  
10 such title is amended by inserting “, hearing aid  
11 specialist” after “dental technologist”.

12 (b) REQUIREMENTS.—With respect to appointing  
13 hearing aid specialists under sections 7401 and 7402 of  
14 title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsection  
15 (a), and providing services furnished by such specialists,  
16 the Secretary shall ensure that—

17 (1) a hearing aid specialist may only perform  
18 hearing services consistent with the hearing aid spe-  
19 cialist’s State license related to the practice of fit-  
20 ting and dispensing hearing aids without excluding

1 other qualified professionals, including audiologists,  
2 from rendering services in overlapping practice  
3 areas;

4 (2) services provided to veterans by hearing aid  
5 specialists shall be provided as part of the non-med-  
6 ical treatment plan developed by an audiologist; and

7 (3) the medical facilities of the Department of  
8 Veterans Affairs provide to veterans access to the  
9 full range of professional services provided by an au-  
10 diologist.

11 (c) CONSULTATION.—In determining the qualifica-  
12 tions required for hearing aid specialists and in carrying  
13 out subsection (b), the Secretary shall consult with vet-  
14 erans service organizations, audiologists,  
15 otolaryngologists, hearing aid specialists, and other stake-  
16 holder and industry groups as the Secretary determines  
17 appropriate.

18 (d) ANNUAL REPORT.—

19 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year  
20 after the date of the enactment of this Act, and an-  
21 nually thereafter during the five-year period begin-  
22 ning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the  
23 Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Con-  
24 gress a report on the following:

1 (A) Timely access of veterans to hearing  
2 health services through the Department of Vet-  
3 erans Affairs.

4 (B) Contracting policies of the Department  
5 with respect to providing hearing health serv-  
6 ices to veterans in facilities that are not facili-  
7 ties of the Department.

8 (2) **TIMELY ACCESS TO SERVICES.**—Each re-  
9 port shall, with respect to the matter specified in  
10 paragraph (1)(A) for the one-year period preceding  
11 the submittal of such report, include the following:

12 (A) The staffing levels of audiologists,  
13 hearing aid specialists, and health technicians  
14 in audiology in the Veterans Health Adminis-  
15 tration.

16 (B) A description of the metrics used by  
17 the Secretary in measuring performance with  
18 respect to appointments and care relating to  
19 hearing health.

20 (C) The average time that a veteran waits  
21 to receive an appointment, beginning on the  
22 date on which the veteran makes the request,  
23 for the following:

24 (i) A disability rating evaluation for a  
25 hearing-related disability.

- 1 (ii) A hearing aid evaluation.
- 2 (iii) Dispensing of hearing aids.
- 3 (iv) Any follow-up hearing health ap-
- 4 pointment.

5 (D) The percentage of veterans whose total  
6 wait time for appointments described in sub-  
7 paragraph (C), including an initial and follow-  
8 up appointment, if applicable, is more than 30  
9 days.

10 (3) CONTRACTING POLICIES.—Each report  
11 shall, with respect to the matter specified in para-  
12 graph (1)(B) for the one-year period preceding the  
13 submittal of such report, include the following:

14 (A) The number of veterans that the Sec-  
15 retary refers to non-Department audiologists  
16 for hearing health care appointments.

17 (B) The number of veterans that the Sec-  
18 retary refers to non-Department hearing aid  
19 specialists for follow-up appointments for a  
20 hearing aid evaluation, the dispensing of hear-  
21 ing aids, or any other purpose relating to hear-  
22 ing health.

