May 30, 2023

The Honorable Doris Matsui

Fax: 202-225-0566

**Re: HR244 – Medicare Hearing Aid Coverage Act - SUPPORT**

Dear Congresswoman Matsui,

I write to you on behalf of Yolo Healthy Aging Alliance to thank you for supporting Debbie Dingell’s bill, which would require the Government Accounting Office to study insurance programs that offer coverage for hearing exams and hearing aids in the Medicare programs.

Yolo Healthy Aging Alliance is a nonprofit that promotes the wellbeing of our older adults through education, collaboration, and advocacy, and we strongly support HR244. According to the CDC, “hearing loss can have a profound impact on quality of life.” Over time, barriers to communication can lead to social isolation and strained relationships, and hearing loss may lead to safety issues, due to a loss of situational awareness. Hearing loss also has a strong association with depression and cognitive decline, including the development of dementia.

This bill is the first step in understanding the costs associated with providing hearing care and the factors of cost savings with dementia care. Therefore, we write with urgency to help this bill through the House process so we can reduce the risk of dementia, reduce costs associated with dementia care, and improve quality of life and safety for our seniors.

Sincerely,

Sheila Allen, RN, PhD

Executive Director, Yolo Healthy Aging Alliance