

2018-2019 Deaf and Hard of Hearing Alliance Updates

- Opposed repealing rules that require carriers to provide notice of network changes that affect the interoperability of customer premises equipment, opposed forbearance from the process for carriers seeking to discontinue legacy services, and opposed repealing outreach requirements on discontinuances.
- Signed on with cross-disability organizations to DOT letter regarding opposition to Delta's and United's new service animal policies for March 1. Delta's 48-hours requirement to submit documentation is especially onerous. United's new policy applies only to *emotional* support animals, not to trained service animals.
- Cabin Announcements Task Force met on March 2. Due to Executive Order 13771, DOT unlikely to pursue any new regulation on cabin announcements in the new term. So we are considering developing a best practices document. . The FAA made reassurances that it could be incorporated in their formal guidelines that are typically followed by the airlines.
- American Cochlear Implant Alliance had a Hill day focused on educating legislators about the impact changes to Medicaid could have on individuals who have or seek cochlear implants. About 50% of individuals who receive a CI are currently covered through Medicaid. Any significant reduction to funding is of concern and most particularly to children who represent a large percentage of individuals who receive a CI through Medicaid. Hill visits also included educating legislators regarding concerns about access to cochlear implants within the Veterans Administration (VA) system due to evidence that suggests that veterans do not have the same type of access to cochlear implants as they currently do to hearing aids. Nicole Westin reported that ACIA is also looking for people to sign on to a letter being drafted by Representative McKinley to the VA.
- Comment on the IPCTS rulemaking re: access issues and ability of the audiologists to be able to authorize captioned phones and how audiologists do authorize captioned phones. AAA is paying attention to and hoping to have some further conversations with the FCC over the next few weeks before the reply comment date is done.
- NCRA is working on generating awareness among their members regarding ASR and that there is a petition that has nearly a thousand signatures. The petition acknowledges that ASR is not up to standard in terms of quality and accuracy but that we object to the move by Sinclair and states that we want better quality captions. It was picked up by HLAA social media and may be posted there.
- The NASDSE Deaf Education Guidelines have been published and available by download (electronically) or purchase (in print) at nasdse.org.
- The Hearing Aid Compatibility (HAC) filing regarding cell phone reporting requirements: The HLA with the help of NAD, TDI and the PARC at Gallaudet have worked together with the cell phone industry to set guidelines and require cell phone companies to update websites once a month so consumers can find hearing aid compatible phones and to provide in-store testing for compatibility. Next year, a task force will continue to strive to move the industry forward in hearing aid compatibility. The group continues working on the Internet Protocol Caption Telephone Services (IPCTS) seeing a tremendous amount of movement in that area.