



April 9, 2024

The Honorable Janice Schakowsky
c/o Michelle Paucar
2408 Rayburn House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Pete Sessions
c/o Reid Wilson
2204 Rayburn House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: ITEM Coalition Support for H.R. 1328, the Medical Device Nonvisual Accessibility Act of 2024

Dear Representatives Schakowsky and Sessions:

The undersigned members of the Independence Through Enhancement of Medicare and Medicaid (“ITEM”) Coalition write to express our support for H.R. 1328, the *Medical Device Nonvisual Accessibility Act of 2024*. We applaud your leadership in sponsoring this bipartisan legislation that would require the Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”) to develop rules requiring that new medical devices with digital displays, such as blood pressure monitors and insulin pumps, include accessible features for blind or visually impaired users. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues to enact this bill into law.

The ITEM Coalition is a national consumer- and clinician-led coalition advocating for access to and coverage of assistive devices, technologies, and related services for persons with injuries, illnesses, disabilities, and chronic conditions of all ages. Our members represent individuals with a wide range of disabling conditions, as well as the providers who serve them, including limb loss and limb difference, multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injury, brain injury, stroke, paralysis, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, hearing, speech, and visual impairments, myositis, and other life-altering conditions.

The *Medical Device Nonvisual Accessibility Act* is designed to improve access to home medical devices for blind and visually impaired individuals, allowing for overall better health outcomes and improved ability to maintain full independence and control over their own healthcare. The rapid evolution of digital technology has resulted in more intricate user interfaces for common products, including critical medical devices. Many of these new devices rely on visual displays and require users to interact with on-screen menus and interfaces, posing challenges for consumers who are blind or have low vision.

Ensuring access to assistive medical devices is a longstanding priority for the ITEM Coalition. Accessible medical devices are critical to ensure that individuals who are blind or have low-vision are able to benefit from their usage privately, independently, and safely. The ITEM Coalition strongly supports the implementation of nonvisual accessibility standards for medical devices used in the home. Ensuring that medical devices are designed with nonvisual accessibility features will have the potential to greatly improve the overall healthcare experience

and quality of life of individuals with blindness or low vision. We support this impactful legislation.

For additional information about the ITEM Coalition, please contact the ITEM Coalition co-coordinators, Peter Thomas at Peter.Thomas@PowersLaw.com, Leela Baggett at Leela.Baggett@PowersLaw.com, and Michael Barnett at Michael.Barnett@PowersLaw.com.

Sincerely,

The Undersigned Members of the ITEM Coalition

Access Ready Inc.
ACCSES
Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
All Wheels Up
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Association on Health and Disability
American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine
American Council of the Blind
American Macular Degeneration Foundation
American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association
American Occupational Therapy Association
*Amputee Coalition**
Assistive Technology Industry Association
Blinded Veterans Association
Center for Medicare Advocacy
Easterseals, Inc.
Easterseals DC MD VA
Institute for Matching Person & Technology
International Eye Foundation
International Registry of Rehabilitation Technology Suppliers
Lakeshore Foundation
Lighthouse Guild
Long Island Center for Independent Living, Inc.
Medicare Rights Center
National Association for the Advancement of Orthotics and Prosthetics
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
Perkins School for the Blind
Prevent Blindness
Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington
RESNA

The Support Sight Foundation
The Viscardi Center
The Vision Council
United Cerebral Palsy
United Spinal Association*
VisionServe Alliance

Other Supporting Organizations:
EyeSight Foundation of Alabama

**** ITEM Coalition Steering Committee Member***