

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5936

To amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide hair prostheses under the Medicaid Program for individuals diagnosed with alopecia areata.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 30, 2008

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico (for herself and Ms. ESHOO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide hair prostheses under the Medicaid Program for individuals diagnosed with alopecia areata.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Alopecia Areata Med-
5 icaid Improvement and Parity Act of 2008”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds as follows:

1 (1) Alopecia areata is a highly unpredictable,
2 autoimmune skin disease resulting in the loss of hair
3 on the scalp and elsewhere on the body.

4 (2) Approximately 5,000 Medicaid recipients
5 suffer from the most severe forms of the condition,
6 alopecia areata universalis or alopecia areata totalis,
7 which are characterized by the total, or near total,
8 loss of all body and scalp hair.

9 (3) Adults with alopecia areata universalis and
10 totalis have lost jobs, been harassed or accused of
11 belonging to extremist cults because of their hair
12 loss. Children with the condition have been moved to
13 special education classes and ostracized by their
14 peers.

15 (4) Dermatologists consider it entirely appro-
16 priate and necessary that patients with alopecia
17 areata be reimbursed for a hair prosthesis. Der-
18 matologists also state that the need for a hair pros-
19 thesis is much the same as the need for a leg pros-
20 thesis and is sometimes the best therapeutic alter-
21 native available.

22 (5) Twelve States already provide Medicaid cov-
23 erage for hair prostheses for people with alopecia
24 areata because these devices are considered medi-
25 cally necessary when prescribed by a physician.

1 **SEC. 3. IMPROVEMENT OF ALOPECIA AREATA COVERAGE**
2 **UNDER MEDICAID.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1902(a)(10) of the Social
4 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(10)) is amended—

5 (1) by striking “and” at the end of subpara-
6 graph (F);

7 (2) by adding “and” at the end of subpara-
8 graph (G); and

9 (3) by adding at the end the following new sub-
10 paragraph:

11 “(H) that if medical assistance is included
12 for inpatient hospital services for an individual,
13 then the plan must include making medical as-
14 sistance available to the individual for annual
15 coverage of one scalp hair prosthesis if the indi-
16 vidual is diagnosed with alopecia areata
17 universalis or alopecia areata totalis or if the
18 individual’s attending physician certifies in writ-
19 ing the medical necessity of that proposed
20 course of rehabilitative treatment;”.

21 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
22 subsection (a) shall apply with respect to items furnished
23 on or after January 1, 2009, without regard to whether
24 or not final regulations to carry out such amendments
25 have been promulgated by such date.