

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 29 2010

RE: S.C.R. No. 12
S.D. 1

Honorable Colleen Hanabusa
President of the Senate
Twenty-Fifth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2010
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committees on Health and Commerce and Consumer Protection, to which was referred S.C.R. No. 12 entitled:

"SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO ASSESS THE SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL EFFECTS OF REQUIRING HEALTH INSURERS TO OFFER COVERAGE FOR HEARING AIDS,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to request the Auditor to conduct an impact assessment report of the social and financial impacts of mandating coverage for hearing aids. This measure, in tandem with S.B. No. 192, S.D. 1, is intended to satisfy the requirements of sections 23-51 and 23-52 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Disability and Communication Access Board, and two individuals. Testimony in support of the intent of this measure with amendments was received by the Hawaii Medical Service Association. Written testimony presented to the Committees may be reviewed on the Legislature's website.

Your Committees find that hearing aids bring significant benefits to most hearing impaired individuals. Yet the cost of hearing aids is often prohibitively expensive, making them unaffordable to many hearing impaired residents of Hawaii, who must as a result live with a significantly lower quality of life.



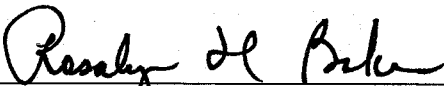
The Auditor's study requested by this measure will examine the concerns of hearing impaired residents and insurance companies and will provide useful information for purposes of future decision-making on this issue.

Your Committees have amended this measure by including language to ensure a comprehensive review of the issue. Accordingly, as amended, this measure specifies that the Auditor's study should include:

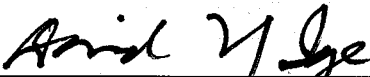
- (1) Identification of the target population to facilitate cost analysis;
- (2) A survey of the experience of states that mandate coverage for hearing aids and cochlear implants;
- (3) Review of standards, including device replacement standards and cost limitations, currently used by public and private entities that provide coverage for hearing aids; and
- (4) A comparison of the cost of cochlear implants with the cost of hearing aids.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Health and Commerce and Consumer Protection that are attached to this report, your Committees concur with the intent and purpose of S.C.R. No. 12, as amended herein, and recommend that it be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, in the form attached hereto as S.C.R. No. 12, S.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Health and
Commerce and Consumer
Protection,



ROSALYN H. BAKER, Chair

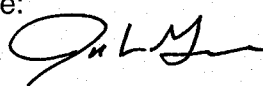


DAVID Y. IGE, Chair



The Senate
 Twenty-Fifth Legislature
 State of Hawaii

Record of Votes
Committee on Health
HTH

Bill / Resolution No.:* SCR 12	Committee Referral: HTH/CPN,WAM	Date: 3/5/10		
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
IGE, David Y. (C)	✓			
GREEN, M.D., Josh (VC)	✓			
BAKER, Rosalyn H.	✓			
ESPERO, Will	✓			
NISHIHARA, Clarence K.				✓
HEMMINGS, Fred				✓
TOTAL	4	0	0	2
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: <div style="text-align:center;"></div>				
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink Goldenrod File with Committee Report Clerk's Office Drafting Agency Committee File Copy				

*Only one measure per Record of Votes

