

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

806

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 16 2011

RE: S.C.R. No. 3  
S.D. 1

Honorable Shan S. Tsutsui  
President of the Senate  
Twenty-Sixth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2011  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Human Services and Commerce and Consumer Protection, to which was referred S.C.R. No. 3 entitled:

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

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to request the Auditor to conduct an impact assessment report of the social and financial impacts of mandating health insurers to offer coverage for hearing aids.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Disability and Communication Access Board, Assistive Technology Resource Centers of Hawaii, and seventeen individuals.

Your Committees find that hearing is essential to most individuals in their daily lives, because it allows people to be connected to others in their environments. Your Committees further find that individuals who have difficulty hearing can experience distorted and incomplete communication, which can impact their professional and personal lives.

Your Committees also find that a hearing aid enhances an individual's ability to interact independently in the community, but the cost may be prohibitive to the average adult. According to testimony received by your Committees, hearing aids can cost between \$1,000 and \$4,000. Medicare and most health insurance

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companies do not cover the cost of hearing aids. Having some of the cost covered by a health plan would enable more individuals to obtain hearing aids.

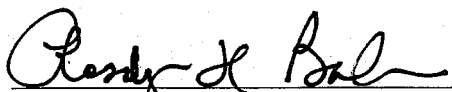
Your Committees additionally find that the study proposed in this measure is required by state law, pursuant to section 23-51, Hawaii Revised Statutes, prior to mandating coverage for hearing aids.

Your Committees have amended this measure by:

- (1) Amending a reference from "persons suffering from hearing loss" to "persons who are deaf or hard of hearing" to reflect a people-first philosophy that acknowledges a person first, then a physical condition; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Human Services and Commerce and Consumer Protection that are attached to this report, your Committees concur with the intent and purpose of S.C.R. No. 3, 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. 3, S.D. 1.

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

  
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ROSALYN H. BAKER, Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
SUZANNE CHUN OAKLAND, Chair



The Senate  
 Twenty-Sixth Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Human Services**  
**HMS**

Bill / Resolution No.:* <i>SCR 3</i>	Committee Referral: <i>HMS (CPN, WAM)</i>	Date: <i>3-10-11</i>		
<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
CHUN OAKLAND, Suzanne (C)	✓			
IHARA, Jr., Les (VC)	✓			
GREEN, M.D., Josh	✓			
SLOM, Sam				✓
<b>TOTAL</b>	<i>3</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>				
<b>Distribution:</b> Original     Yellow     Pink     Goldenrod File with Committee Report     Clerk's Office     Drafting Agency     Committee File Copy				

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes

