

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 05 2013

RE: S.B. No. 309  
S.D. 1

Honorable Donna Mercado Kim  
President of the Senate  
Twenty-Seventh State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2013  
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committees on Human Services and Commerce and Consumer Protection, to which was referred S.B. No. 309 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO HEARING AIDS,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to require health insurance policies and contracts issued after December 31, 2013, to provide coverage for the cost of hearing aids in their base plans.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawaii Medical Service Association, ILWU Local 142, and two individuals. Your Committees received testimony in opposition to this measure from State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company. Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs.

Your Committees find that according to the National Institutes of Health, an estimated one-third of Americans between the ages of sixty-five and seventy-five and around one-half of those older than seventy-five have some degree of hearing loss. In addition, a 2005 study by the Better Hearing Institute estimated that untreated hearing loss resulted in a loss of income per household of up to \$12,000 per year. Your Committees further find that according to the Lions Club, the cost of a custom low-to mid-level analog or digital hearing aid begins around \$2,000 or less, and around \$3,000 and higher for a high-end hearing aid. Medicare and most private insurance companies do not cover the

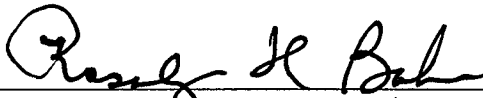


cost of hearing aids through their base health care coverage. As a result, it is not unusual for people with hearing loss to choose not to purchase hearing aids because these expensive devices are not covered by insurance.

Your Committees have amended this measure by 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 are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 309, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 309, S.D. 1, and be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

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



ROSALYN H. BAKER, Chair




SUZANNE CHUN OAKLAND, Chair



The Senate  
 Twenty-Seventh Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

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

Bill / Resolution No.:* <b>SB 309</b>	Committee Referral: <b>HMS/CPN, WAM</b>	Date: <b>1/31/13</b>		
<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)	✓			
GREEN, Josh (VC)				✓
KIDANI, Michelle N.				✓
TANIGUCHI, Brian T.	✓			
SLOM, Sam		✓		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
<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

The Senate  
 Twenty-Seventh Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection**  
**CPN**

Bill / Resolution No.:* <b>SB 309</b>	Committee Referral: <b>HMS/CPN, WAM</b>	Date: <b>1/31/13</b>		
<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				
<b>Members</b>	<b>Aye</b>	<b>Aye (WR)</b>	<b>Nay</b>	<b>Excused</b>
BAKER, Rosalyn H. (C)	✓			
GALUTERIA, Brickwood (VC)	✓			
NISHIHARA, Clarence K.	✓			
SOLOMON, Malama	✓			
TANIGUCHI, Brian T.	✓			
WAKAI, Glenn	✓			
SLOM, Sam		✓		
<b>TOTAL</b>	6	1	0	0
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
<b>Distribution:</b> Original     Yellow     Pink     Goldenrod File with Committee Report     Clerk's Office     Drafting Agency     Committee File Copy				

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