

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

3092

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 25 2014

RE: S.C.R. No. 34

S.D. 1

Honorable Donna Mercado Kim
President of the Senate
Twenty-Seventh State Legislature
Regular Session of 2014
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection, to which was referred S.C.R. No. 34 entitled:

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

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to request the Auditor to assess the social and financial impacts of requiring health insurers to offer coverage for hearing aids.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, Disability and Communication Access Board, and five individuals.

Your Committee finds that hearing aids can help a person remain connected to others in their community. However, the cost of a hearing aid is prohibitive to the average adult. This cost may be multiplied when several individuals in one family require hearing aids. Mandating health insurance coverage for hearing aids will enhance the ability of persons who are deaf or hard of hearing to function effectively within their community in a cost effective manner.

Your Committee further finds that this measure requests the Auditor to assess the social and financial impacts of requiring health insurers to offer coverage for hearing aids, as proposed under Senate Bill No. 309, S.D. 1 (2013), pursuant to the

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procedural requirements under sections 23-51 and 23-52, Hawaii Revised Statutes, for legislation proposing mandatory health insurance coverage.

Your Committee additionally finds that the addition of a new mandated health insurance benefit under Hawaii law may trigger Section 1311(d)(3) of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (Affordable Care Act), which requires states to defray the additional cost of any benefits in excess of the essential health benefits of the state's qualified health plan. Your Committee therefore finds that the impact of the Affordable Care Act on the mandatory health insurance coverage for hearing aids, as proposed by Senate Bill No. 309, S.D. 1 (2013), should be included within the Auditor's impact assessment report.

Accordingly, your Committee has amended this measure by requesting the Auditor to include within the impact assessment report the impact of federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 requirements if mandated health insurance coverage for hearing aids is implemented in Hawaii.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection that is attached to this report, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of S.C.R. No. 34, as amended herein, and recommends that it be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, in the form attached hereto as S.C.R. No. 34, S.D. 1.

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



ROSALYN H. BAKER, Chair



The Senate
 Twenty-Seventh Legislature
 State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
CPN

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:		
SR 34	CPN, WAM	3/21/14		
<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
BAKER, Rosalyn H. (C)	✓			
TANIGUCHI, Brian T. (VC)	✓			
NISHIHARA, Clarence K.	✓			
WAKAI, Glenn				✓
SLOM, Sam				✓
TOTAL	3	0	0	2
Recommendation:				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature:				
Distribution:				
Original	Yellow	Pink	Goldenrod	
File with Committee Report	Clerk's Office	Drafting Agency	Committee File Copy	

*Only one measure per Record of Votes