

LATE

Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Vice Chair

RE: SCR 34

Dear Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection,

I am writing in support of SCR 34. I am in favor of the audit regarding hearing aids for a number of reasons.

Hearing aids are an essential part of quality of life just as vision. An inability to hear affect relationships and quality of life. Children and elderly have a difficulty time getting hearing aids. The current insurance payments are not adequate for the current hearing aid technology. We need to look at making hearing aids as affordable as glasses.

My experience with hard of hearing people is at three different levels. I work with hard of hearing children who's families struggle financially. As the student grow up, their hearing changes and the need good support for their own educational benefit. I have had students go without hearing aids for months. That affected their schooling (harder to hear the teachers and classmates) and their confidence.

My mother had a progressive hearing loss as she got older. She needed hearing aids after retirement age. She was not eligible through Vocational Rehabilitation. It was good to see her confidence go up when she had good functioning aids.

Several years ago I also started using hearing aids. I was lucky and got financial help through Vocational Rehabilitation but I learned first hand how subtly hearing loss affects your relationships. I would hate to do without my hearing aids and worry about maintaining my hearing after I retire.

I would appreciate your support of SCR 34. It would help see what insurance companies need to do to align their benefits with actual hearing aid costs.

Thank you for your consideration.

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