

JAN 25 2017

---

---

# SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND TO INCLUDE HEARING AID ASSISTANCE IN THE HEALTH BENEFIT PLANS AVAILABLE TO RETIREE-BENEFICIARIES.

1           WHEREAS, there are 44,283 retiree-beneficiaries of the  
2 Employees' Retirement System of the State of Hawaii, and 9,783  
3 of the beneficiaries are over eighty years of age, including  
4 forty-three who are over one hundred years of age; and  
5

6           WHEREAS, according to the National Institutes of Health, an  
7 estimated one-third of Americans between the ages of sixty-five  
8 and seventy-five and around one-half of those older than  
9 seventy-five have some degree of hearing loss; and  
10

11           WHEREAS, based on research from the National Institutes of  
12 Health and others, hearing loss is now recognized as a  
13 significant social and health problem that severely impacts the  
14 quality of life of individuals experiencing hearing loss; and  
15

16           WHEREAS, especially in the elderly, hearing loss can impair  
17 the exchange of information, causing loneliness, isolation,  
18 dependence, and frustration; and  
19

20           WHEREAS, Medicare insurance plans only cover hearing  
21 testing and do not cover hearing aid purchases and related  
22 services; and  
23

24           WHEREAS, according to the Lions Clubs International  
25 Foundation, the average cost of high quality hearing aids is  
26 \$3,600, and because insurance often does not include hearing aid  
27 assistance, many people are left with cheaper, poorly  
28 functioning hearing aids; now, therefore,  
29

30           BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-ninth  
31 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2017, the



