

MAR 10 2022

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO ASSESS THE SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL
EFFECTS OF MANDATING HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR HEARING
AIDS.

1 WHEREAS, according to the National Institutes of Health,
2 about one-third of Americans between the ages of sixty-five and
3 seventy-five and around one-half of those older than seventy-
4 five have some degree of hearing loss; and

5
6 WHEREAS, the cost for one digital hearing aid can be around
7 \$3,000 or more and because about fifty percent of childhood
8 hearing loss is due to genetic causes, more than one member in a
9 family may need to wear hearing aids, thereby multiplying the
10 financial burden of purchasing hearing aids; and

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12 WHEREAS, while most health insurance plans in Hawaii cover
13 the purchase of hearing aids, the amount of coverage may be low,
14 leaving the patient with a large copayment; and

15
16 WHEREAS, it is not unusual for people with hearing loss to
17 choose to delay or forgo the purchase of hearing aids because
18 they are unable to pay for them; and

19
20 WHEREAS, S.B. No. 2439, S.D. 1, introduced during the
21 Regular Session of 2022, requires health insurers, mutual
22 benefit societies, and health maintenance organizations that
23 provide coverage for health care to provide coverage for hearing
24 aids; and

25
26 WHEREAS, pursuant to section 23-51, Hawaii Revised
27 Statutes, before any legislative measure that mandates health
28 insurance coverage for specific health services, specific
29 diseases, or certain providers of health care services as part
30 of individual or group health insurance policies can be
31 considered, there shall be a concurrent resolution passed that
32 designates a specific legislative bill for the Auditor to review



S.C.R. NO. 61

1 and on which to prepare a report for submission to the
 2 Legislature that assesses both the social and financial effects
 3 of the proposed mandated coverage, and S.B. No. 2439, S.D. 1,
 4 Regular Session of 2022, is such a measure; now, therefore,
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6 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first
 7 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2022, the
 8 House of Representatives concurring, that the Auditor is
 9 requested to conduct an assessment, pursuant to sections 23-51
 10 and 23-52, Hawaii Revised Statutes, of the social and financial
 11 effects of mandating health insurance coverage for hearing aids,
 12 as proposed in S.B. No. 2439, S.D. 1, which was introduced
 13 during the Regular Session of 2022; and
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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Auditor is requested to
 16 submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including
 17 any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than
 18 twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of
 19 2023; and
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21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 22 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Auditor and
 23 Insurance Commissioner.
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 25
 26

OFFERED BY:


 A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, written over a horizontal line. The signature is highly cursive and difficult to decipher.
