STAND. COM. REP. NO. 817

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 0 3 2023

RE: S.B. No. 609 S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi President of the Senate Thirty-Second State Legislature Regular Session of 2023 State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Ways and Means, to which was referred S.B. No. 609, S.D. 1, 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 on or after January 1, 2024, to provide coverage for the cost of hearing aids at a minimum of an unspecified amount per hearing aid for each hearing-impaired ear every thirty-six months.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Disability and Communication Access Board and twelve individuals. Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund Board of Trustees, and Hawaii Medical Service Association.

Your Committees find that untreated hearing loss can cause depression and a feeling of isolation that can hinder an individual's ability to attend work or school, resulting in lost income and less participation and engagement in their communities. Your Committees further find that untreated hearing loss is the largest modifiable risk factor for developing dementia. Your Committees also find that hearing aids can significantly improve the quality of life for individuals with hearing impairments by

allowing them to access and comprehend information and their surroundings and improve the communication level with their communities. Your Committees find however, that many individuals with hearing impairments often delay or forgo the purchase of hearing aids because of the significant out-of-pocket costs. measure establishes minimum insurance coverage requirements through private insurers to promote access to affordable hearing aids.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Ways and Means that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 609, S.D. 1, and recommend that it pass Third Reading.

> Respectfully submitted on behalf of the members of the Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Ways and Means,

KEOHOKALOLE,

The Senate Thirty-Second Legislature State of Hawaiʻi

Record of Votes Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection CPN

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral: Date:							
SB609 SDI HHS, CPN/WAM 3/1/23								
The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.								
If so, then the previous decision was to:								
The Recommendation is:								
Pass, unamended Pass, with amendments Hold Recommit 2312 2311 2310 2313								
Members		Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused			
KEOHOKALOLE, Jarrett (C)		V						
FUKUNAGA, Carol (VC)		V						
MCKELVEY, Angus L.K.								
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim"		V	. = =					
AWA, Brenton								
<u> </u>			<u> </u>					
-								
TOTAL		5						
Recommendation: Adopted Not Adopted								
Chair's or Designee's Signature:								
Ond Johnnage								
Distribution: 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 Thirty-Second Legislature State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes Committee on Ways and Means WAM

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:			Date:				
SB 609 SDI	HHS, CPN/WAM 3			3/1/2	3/1/23			
The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.								
If so, then the previous decision was to:								
The Recommendation is:								
Pass, unamended Pass, with amendments Hold Recommit 2312 2311 2310 2313								
Members		Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused			
DELA CRUZ, Donovan M. (C)		×						
KEITH-AGARAN, Gilbert S.C. (VC)		X						
AQUINO, Henry J.C.		X						
DECOITE, Lynn		X						
INOUYE, Lorraine R.		X						
KANUHA, Dru Mamo		X						
KIDANI, Michelle N.		X						
KIM, Donna Mercado		×						
LEE, Chris		X						
MORIWAKI, Sharon Y.		X						
SHIMABUKURO, Maile S.L.					X			
WAKAI, Glenn		×						
FEVELLA, Kurt		×						
TOTAL		12_			1			
Recommendation: Adopted Not Adopted								
Chair's or Designee's Signature:								
De schaff								
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink Goldenrod File with Committee Report Clerk's Office Drafting Agency Committee File Copy								

*Only one measure per Record of Votes