

Honolulu, Hawaii

**FEB 18** , 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1996  
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2026  
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Economic Development & Technology, to which was referred H.B. No. 1996, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO HEARING AIDS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to exempt from the general excise tax gross receipts from the sale of hearing aids received by a hospital, infirmary, medical clinic, health care facility, pharmacy, or practitioner licensed to administer drugs to an individual.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Disability and Communication Access Board and five individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Taxation and Tax Foundation of Hawaii.

Your Committee finds that hearing aids are a vital auxiliary medical aid for people who are deaf or hard of hearing and can facilitate effective independent communication, which is critical for workforce participation and overall economic opportunity. Your Committee further finds that the imposition of the general excise tax, which can be several hundred dollars, on top of the high cost for hearing aids can limit access and create barriers that affect productivity and quality of life. This measure



supports greater affordability by helping to reduce costs for consumers and improve economic participation across communities.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Economic Development & Technology that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1996, H.D. 1, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Economic  
Development & Technology,



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GREGGOR ILAGAN, Chair



