

August 16, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

I am responsible for the sound system in our medium sized church. About 7 years ago, money was made available for a system to help the hard of hearing during our worship service. After I did a survey of the options, it was clear that the “Loop” approach was favored over all the other options by people who are actually hard of hearing. The advantage of the “Loop” is that people with telecoils in their hearing aids can hear the service without using headphones. And with a loop system, headphones are made available to those without hearing aids or those without telecoils in their hearing aid.

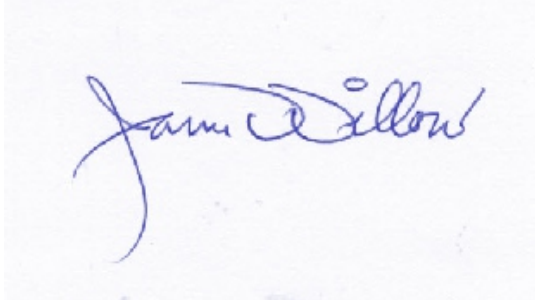
People with hearing aids equipped with a telecoil actually raved about how great it was to come to church because they could hear everything that was going on, unlike so many other venues without a “Loop”.

On the other hand, one woman had a very **sad** experience. She bought an expensive pair of hearing aids for the first time and was excited about being able to hear the service in her hearing aids – but she **bought hearing aids without telecoils!** So despite the expense, she would still have to use headphones to hear the service well. Even sadder, she didn’t use the headphones, perhaps because she was too vain or the headphones were a nuisance. Whatever the reason, she missed out on a great benefit of hearing aids just because she wasn’t properly informed when she made her purchase.

I am hard of hearing and I’m glad that my hearing aid provider made sure my hearing aid was equipped with telecoils. When I am in a venue equipped with a “Loop” system, I am able to clearly hear the presentation. In fact, I can hear better than I can by just turning the volume up on my hearing aids because I am hearing what is going into the microphone directly in my hearing aids – undistorted by the venue’s acoustics or background noise.

I view hearing loss as a disability and I feel sorry for those whose quality of life is reduced because they are not informed about this simple feature when they purchase a hearing aid. I believe hearing aid clients should be informed of all optional technology before being fitted with hearing aids. This is the only way that people can make an informed decision about a major purchase that can have a significant impact on their quality of life. This is why I support legislation that would require hearing aid providers to

inform people that are buying hearing aids of the options available, and particularly the telecoil feature that allows people to hear better in a “looped” venue. This is even more important as the number of venues that are “looped” grows.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim Dillow". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a distinct "D".

Jim Dillow, St. Andrew Presbyterian Church
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