

**IN REGARD TO A BILL
TO PROVIDE FOR INFORMATION ABOUT HEARING AID OPTIONS
THAT CAN PROVIDE A DIRECT CONNECTION BETWEEN HEARING AIDS AND
ADA MANDATED ASSISTIVE LISTENING SYSTEMS.**

Why this legislation is needed: Studies and testimony from hearing aid users at hearing loss support meetings and elsewhere document the fact that up to two thirds of first time hearing aid buyers are not adequately counseled in telecoil technology and its many applications in their daily life including hearing aid compatible access to ADA required assistive listening systems. Telecoils are technology used to hear better on the phone, when watching TV, in theaters or places of worship and in other ways. A survey found that nearly 85 % of those hearing aid wearers who know about the technology have it in their hearing aids and use it regularly. It can supplement Bluetooth® and other, newer hearing aid technologies and can provide communication access in large venues for multiple users where Bluetooth® cannot and it is the only currently available technology for large scale use that meets the ADA mandate for hearing aid compatibility in assistive listening systems.

How this bill addresses the need: The proposed consumer protection bill would revise the statute that created the NM Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Practices Board. It would require that hearing care providers provide counseling on a technology called for in the ADA, by hearing loss support organizations, and by hard of hearing consumers that enables hearing aid buyers to make an informed decision as to their need for (and possible use of) the technology in question prior to the purchase of hearing aids.

States with similar laws: Arizona, Delaware, Florida, New York, Rhode Island, Utah have such a law in force. Efforts are under way for similar regulations in California, Colorado, Iowa, Washington and Wisconsin.

Such laws have had the support of the nation's three largest support organizations for the hard of hearing - Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), Association of Late Deafened Adults (ALDA) and Telecommunications for the Deaf (TDI) and organizations such as AARP and many others.

Who Has Expressed Supported This Legislation in NM

National Offices of:

Association of Late Deafened Adults - ALDA, Hearing Loss Association of America - HLAA
Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing - TDI

State Organizations/Agencies

AARP New Mexico, Governor's Commission on Disability
New Mexico HLAA Chapters - Albuquerque, Las Cruces, Santa Fe
NM Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons, Independent Living Resource Center ,
New Mexico Association for the Deaf

Individuals

Leland Bowen - Las Placitas Presbyterian Church Sound Technician
Cynthia Compton-Conley, Ph.D - Audiologist, University Professor, consultant and consumer advocate
Jim Dillow - St. Andrew Presbyterian Church Sound Technician
Dr. Michael Flores - UNM, Speech and Hearing Sciences Professor
Stephen O. Frazier - Hearing Loss Support Specialist
Patricia Kricos , Ph D. - Audiology Professor, U of Florida, former President, American Academy of Audiology
Dr. Juliette Sterkens, Audiologist, national HLAA hearing loop advocate
Sam Trychin, Ph. D.- Hearing loss psychologist

Letters of support posted at: www.CCAnm.com

Dispelling misinformation:

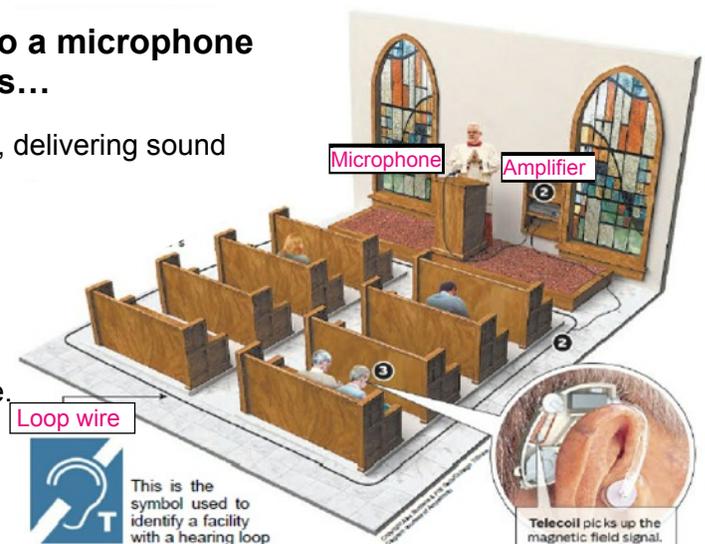
- **Bluetooth:** When questioned, many hearing care providers will claim that clients do not need telecoils if they have Bluetooth, a wireless technology that can connect hearing aids to smart phones, computers and many other devices. Without the use of additional devices by users such as their personal cell phones, Bluetooth cannot connect groups of people wirelessly to the sound system in large places of assembly whereas telecoils can.
- **Law not needed - clients already counseled:** This is patently untrue. A survey of 260 hearing aid wearers (mostly New Mexico residents) found that 66.25% of respondents reported they had not been told about telecoils during the purchase process for their first pair of hearing aids. The same complaint is regularly registered at hearing loss support group meetings in New Mexico and with national hearing loss support organizations such as HLAA, ALDA and TDI.
- **Law not needed - professional best practices require provider to counsel:** The requirement from AAA and ASHA is that the professional adequately counsel clients in the technology dispensed to them. If they are not fitted with telecoil equipped hearing aids there is no requirement to tell them about telecoils. The same is true of the rules currently in place for the NM Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Practices Board.
- **Telecoils are old technology and “on the way out”:** Telecoils are currently included or available in over 70% of hearing aid models on the market and in all cochlear implant processors. Since 2012, all new movie theaters and other public places of assembly with a public address system must also have a hearing aid compatible assistive listening system and only telecoil technology meets that compatibility requirement. Availability of venues where telecoils can be used has mushroomed in the last decade and they are the only assistive listening technology accessible with US spec equipment throughout the world.

Hearing loops provide a direct connection to a microphone for those with telecoil equipped hearing aids...

A hearing loop system turns hearing aids into headsets, delivering sound right into the ear.

HOW IT WORKS

1. Person speaks into a microphone.
2. Amplifier sends that sound current to a wire loop surrounding the listeners, creating a magnetic zone.
3. Zone becomes a magnetic field and delivers signal to the listeners' telecoils/hearing aids much like a radio signal is delivered to a radio.



New Mexico currently has over 120 known places of worship, theaters, council chambers, meeting rooms and other venues that feature a hearing loop as their assistive listening system and there is an even greater number who offer the technology's benefits of hearing aid compatibility through the use of neckloops that replace headsets for their FM or Infrared ALS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS CAMPAIGN, GO TO WWW.CCANM.COM.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HEARING LOOPS, VISIT WWW.LOOPNM.COM, or WWW.HEARINGLOOP.ORG