



**Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc.**

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To Whom It May Concern:

Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc. (TDI) wishes to express its unequivocal support for proposed legislation, which will enable people with hearing loss to have equal access to participate fully in public places. This includes ensuring that communication accommodations are provided for those who depend on using both hearing aids and assistive listening systems, not one or the other.

Established in 1968, TDI is an active national advocacy organization focusing its energies and resources to address equal access issues in telecommunications and media for four constituencies in deafness and hearing loss, specifically people who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, late-deafened, or deaf-blind. In consultations with U.S. Congress and a few federal agencies, it has provided leadership in achieving equal access to telecommunications, media, and information technologies for deaf and hard of hearing people.

We understand that the proposed legislation includes language that will ensure that consumers who purchase hearing aids will receive counseling about hearing aid options that provide a direct connection between the hearing aid and assistive listening systems. This is no different from getting referrals from one's primary doctor to get testing and diagnosis from medical personnel that have the training and clinical experience on a certain medical condition or another. Often one would find a public facility as large, noisy, and inconvenient, thus not meeting their needs as an appropriate acoustic environment. Not many do realize this critical point, that everyone has a different level and form of hearing loss. It is imperative that persons with a significant hearing loss, when taking part in these public places, have access to assistive listening systems that greatly enhance amplification of their capacity to hear. When this is appropriately addressed, the reasonable accommodations requirement will then be met for this constituency under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [cstout@tdiforaccess.org](mailto:cstout@tdiforaccess.org) or 919-533-5015.

Sincerely,

Claude L. Stout

Executive Director

Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc. (TDI)

cc: Mr. Stephen O. Frazier, Hearing Loss Support Specialist, New Mexico Chapter Coordinator, Hearing Loss Association of America

***Shaping An Accessible World***