

SB 558 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Gelser Blouin

Senate Committee On Health Care

Action Date: 03/20/23

Action: Do pass with amendments. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 5-0-1-0

Yeas: 5 - Bonham, Campos, Hayden, Patterson, President Wagner

Exc: 1 - Gorsek

Fiscal: No fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 3/8, 3/20

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Specifies that a license issued by the Health Licensing Office is not required to sell over-the-counter air-conduction (acoustic) hearing aids. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Risk (or lack of risk) of further hearing damage for consumers who purchase over-the-counter acoustic hearing aids

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Specifies that "dealing in hearing aids" also includes ordering the use of hearing aids.

BACKGROUND:

Federal regulations define over-the-counter hearing aids as air-conduction (acoustic) hearing aids that amplify and direct sound and do not require implantation or surgery (21 C.F.R. 800.30). For over-the-counter hearing aids, federal regulations do not require intervention of a licensed person, including for transactions by mail or online.

Senate Bill 558 A removes the requirement that a person who sells over-the-counter hearing aids, including by mail, must be licensed by the Health Licensing Office.