MASTER HEARING AID CENTER

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Michael A. Gitter, BC-HIS
Phil Swoboda, Audiologist
Meagan Kaska, Audiologist

October 29, 2000

Honorable Donna Shalala:
Secretary of Health and Social Services
200 Independence Ave. S.W.
Room 615F
Washington D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Shalala:
It is my understanding that the Food and Drug Administration may soon propose changes in the guidelines by which hearing aids are sold that would likely put me out of business and make access to hearing cares services for millions of seniors and others more expensive and less accessible.

I am a board certified and state licensed hearing instrument specialist. Since 1985, I have provided hearing health care service to thousands of Wisconsin's hearing impaired citizens. I am proud of the state of the art offices I have built and the staff of people who work with me to provide the services we offer.

Presently, all three of the providing groups that make up the hearing health care team (hearing instrument specialists, audiologists and physicians) are recognized as qualified "entry points" into the hearing healthcare delivery system. The rule that FDA is advocating would allow audiologists, without any justification, to install themselves as the sole "entry point" into hearing health care by allowing states to require test that only audiologists conduct prior to the purchase of a hearing aid.

Allowing audiologists an exclusive role in the delivery system, without qualified medical data evidencing that such role is necessary for public health reasons, would severely undermine public health and safety. It will increase the cost of services to the hearing impaired. It does not serve the public.

PLEASE WITHDRAW THIS UNJUSTIFABLE FDA PROPOSAL!

I look forward to your response and would appreciate a copy of any letter you send on my behalf.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Gitter, BC-HIS

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HONORABLE DONNA SHALALA
SECRETARY OF HEALTH &SOCIAL SERV.
200 INDEPENDENCE AVE. S.W.RM615F
WASHINGTON D.C. 20201