

October 2, 2000

Honorable Donna Shalala
Secretary of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW Room 615F
Washington, DC 20201

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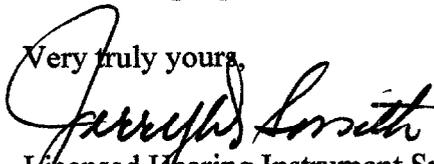
Dear Secretary Shalala,

As a licensed hearing instrument specialist, I write with respect to hearing aids. As the AARP has confirmed, hearing aids are highly effective but dramatically underutilized medical devices. I am very concerned with reports that the Food and Drug Administration has sent you a proposal for revising regulations governing the dispensing of hearing aids.

A revision of the regulations that govern hearing aid dispensing in this country would dramatically increase the cost of hearing health care services. It would also restrict access to hearing health care providers. Please stop and carefully consider the impact that such a revision would have on hearing impaired people in the United States and on the nation's small business hearing aid specialists. In particular, please ensure that any proposed rule meets the obligations of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act.

Hearing impairment is a major health care concern. Please do not let the FDA put forth their proposed rule that would impede access needed hearing health care services for millions of people.

Very truly yours,



Licensed Hearing Instrument Specialist - Iowa Board Certified
National Board Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences

ADDRESS 118 E 13th St.

CITY, STATE, ZIP Ames IA 50010

PHONE / EMAIL 515-233-1367

C4918

HEARING
HU

Administrative Office
118 East 13th Street

P.O. Box 808 Ames, Iowa 50010

UNLIMITED, LLC



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Secretary of Health & Human Service
200 Independence Ave SW, Room 615F
Washington, DC 20201

