



AUDIPHONE CO. OF CLEVELAND, INC. Established 1930

Frank A. Skinner, President

19637 CENTER RIDGE ROAD, ROCKY RIVER, OHIO 44116
829 4-00 OCT 19 P2:11 PHONE: (440) 333-5220

Tuesday, October 10, 2000

Honorable Donna Shalala
Secretary of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Room 615F
Washington, D. C., 20201

Dear Secretary Shalala,

I write to you in respect to hearing aids and as small business owner. My company is a third generation family owned and operated American success story. We dispense hearing aids and we do it very well. Founded in 1930, we are probably the oldest hearing aid dispensing company in the United States.

As a Hearing Instrument Specialist, I have never been so alarmed by the fact that a bad decision could be made by someone that will destroy what my family has built over the last 70 years and render me jobless with a family of six to provide for.

I am very concerned with reports that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has reportedly sent to you a proposal for revising the current regulations governing the dispensing of hearing aids in this country that would dramatically increase the cost of hearing health care services and restrict access to hearing health care providers. Any regulation that would limit the hearing impaired persons' access to a sole provider of hearing health care services will drive up costs to the consumer. A sole provider will also destroy the livelihood of thousands of well trained, competent provider.

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Cleveland's Most Experienced Hearing Aid Center

Please consider carefully the impact that such a proposed rule would have on the nation's hearing impaired 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 don't let the FDA put forth their proposed rule that would impede access to needed hearing health care services for millions of Americans.

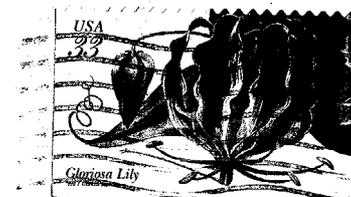
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank A. Skinner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Frank A. Skinner

Board Certified Hearing Instrument Specialist

AUDIPHONE CO.
19637 Center Ridge Rd.
Rocky River, Ohio 44116



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Secretary of Health and Human Services
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