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Honorable Senator Richard Shelby
110 Hart Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Senator Jeff Sessions
495 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Donna Shalala
Secretary of Health & Human Svc
Room 615 F
200 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear ~~██████~~/Secretary, *Shalala*

The Food and Drug Administration is in the process of proposing changes to the way hearing aids are sold that will likely impede access to hearing care services for millions of hearing impaired and senior citizens like myself.

Presently, all three members of the hearing health care delivery team (Hearing Instrument Specialists, Audiologists, Physicians) are recognized as qualified entry points into the hearing health care delivery system. The rule that the 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 expensive and **non essential tests** that only audiologists are qualified to perform.

Allowing audiologists an exclusive role in the hearing aid delivery system, with unqualified medical data evidencing that such a role is necessary for public health reasons, would severely undermine public health and safety, and would increase costs to the hearing impaired and senior citizens.

The medical community, specifically the American Academy of Otolaryngologists (Ear, Nose, and Throat specialists) opposes this FDA proposal.

Please contact the Secretary of Health and Human Service to urge that this FDA-proposed hearing aid rule be withdrawn.

I look forward to your response.

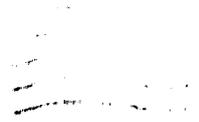
Cordially,

Name *Danny + Jerry Neuman*
Address *201 Covington Ave*
B'ham, AL 35206
Phone *205/836-1332 WK 205/942-8321*

Please pay attention to this letter. I believe you get my drift.

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Donna Shalata
Secretary of Health & Human Services
Room 615 F
200 Independence Ave S.W.
Washington D.C. 20201