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From: Rebecca Chalmers [mailto:chalmersbecky@yahoo.com]

Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2018 8:25 PM

To: Faith Brown

Subject: Testify S 53

May I provide written testimony:

Can you please ensure that this wonderful bill not exclude a disability group? People with hearing loss need equal access to health care. Currently, we are wholesale excluded from most, if not all, insurance plans in Vermont. Everyone needs to hear, or otherwise communicate with, their doctors and healthcare practitioners in order to be a patient that gives informed consent. How can we have good primary health care when we cannot hear our doctors and our healthcare providers? Research is showing that our elders are at risk of dementia when they have untreated hearing loss. Approximately 20% of Vermonters have some hearing loss in at least one ear.

Specifically, I request 1) an anti discrimination provision in this bill that covers hearing disabled people and

2) because there is a discriminatory federal Medicare law that prohibits hearing aid coverage, I request that the following be altered:

"(b) For patients covered by Medicare, Medicare shall continue to be the primary payer for the patients' primary care services, but the State shall cover any co-payment or deductible amounts, or excluded services such as hearing health care, required from a Medicare beneficiary for primary care services."

Sincerely,

Rebecca Chalmers

Rockingham, VT