



DONNA M. ROZAR

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 69TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Office: (608) 267-0280
Toll Free: (888) 534-0069
Rep.Rozar@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708-8953

Testimony before the Senate Committee on Health

Senate Bill 419

September 20, 2023

Thank you Chair Cabral-Guevara, Vice-Chair Testin, and members of the Senate Committee on Health for holding this hearing on Senate Bill (SB) 419, relating to practice of fitting and dealing in hearing aids, certification of hearing instrument specialists to engage in cerumen management, and granting rule-making authority.

SB 419 expands the scope of practice for hearing instruments specialists to include the administration of cerumen management. Cerumen is another name for ear wax, which, over time, accumulates within the ear canal. Excess cerumen has negative effects on the results of hearing tests administered by hearing instrument specialists, as well as the fitting of prescription hearing aids. Under current law and the current scope of practice for these professionals, a client must be sent away to another healthcare provider for cerumen extraction. This causes an inconvenience and added expense to patients as they must schedule an extra appointment to see this additional provider, when their hearing instrument specialist is available at the time of their original appointment.

SB 419 does require those hearing instrument specialists who choose to practice cerumen management to complete a certification course identified by the Hearing and Speech Examining Board. Upon certification, hearing instrument specialists will be more than qualified to serve their clients in an effective and efficient manner.

Thank you for your kind consideration of this Bill. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.



RACHAEL A. CABRAL-GUEVARA

STATE SENATOR • 19TH SENATE DISTRICT

Testimony before the Senate Committee on Health

Senator Rachael Cabral-Guevara

September 20, 2023

Hello, members of the Senate Committee on Health. Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony on Senate Bill 419, an important bill clarifying who can practice cerumen management.

To briefly explain, cerumen is ear wax. Currently, only audiologists can engage in managing the removal of it, which has resulted in over-burdensome patient referrals and unnecessary delays in prescribing hearing aids. This bill intends to allow hearing instrument specialists to practice cerumen management as well.

On several occasions, I have been met with this frustrating roadblock while trying to care for my own patients, resulting in delays for weeks as I scour for an audiologist. By adding this as a practice for hearing instrument specialists, I fully anticipate those treatment delays to be shortened significantly.

Additionally, there are currently too many restrictions on fitting and dealing in hearing aids. With new federal regulations surrounding over-the-counter (OTC) hearing aids, it's important we clarify that audiologists and hearing instrument specialists are only needed to prescribe hearing aids. This complements a bill I am working on to remove receipt requirements from audiologists and hearing instrument specialists for OTC hearing aid sales.

I am hopeful you will be able to support this important step in cutting red tape around hearing aid regulations and delays in care for patients.