



## Information in Support of a bill to require hearing loops in public buildings

### The proposed bill: LRB-0403 INSTALLATION OF HEARING LOOPS IN STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

#### Why is this legislation needed?

- The estimated 500,000<sup>1</sup> hard of hearing people in Wisconsin have great difficulty hearing in public venues such as government buildings.
- Hard of hearing people have difficulty understanding and participating in noisy situation such as public venues, government facilities.
- Hearing loops provide clean, unfettered sound directly to hearing aids equipped with a telecoil.

#### Good acoustics benefit everyone

Good acoustic design provides improved communication access for almost everyone. This is not just for people who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing. People who can hear benefit too. Good acoustic design has two goals:

- Minimize background noise (think about how noisy heating, air conditioning, and water running in pipes can be). This is also called ambient noise.
- Minimize echoes in sound. This is also called reverberation.

By minimizing ambient noise and reverberation, it is much easier for peoples' voices to be heard and understood (especially for the people who are sitting in the back of the room).

#### Why Hearing Loops?

- Hearing loops are a proven technology that is the best option for assisted hearing.
- Other technologies, such as FM or infrared systems, do not have the clarity of a loop.

#### Hearing loops benefit both hearing aid & cochlear implant users

- Many hearing aids and cochlear implants have t-coils (telecoils) built in, which allows users to access hearing loops directly with the push of a button. Many people do not realize that their devices have t-coils so check your hearing aids or cochlear implants. You might even want to talk with your audiologist about t-coils. Hearing Loss Association of America has an online brochure with helpful information called, [Get in the Hearing Loop](#).
- In addition, hearing loops can also send sound to portable loop receivers with headphones. Attendees at an event can request the facilities' headphones to be able to access high-quality, clear sound (if they have loops installed where the event is located).

#### How will this bill address the need?

- Requires that a hearing loop is installed in any construction or renovation in buildings owned, leased or occupied by the state or a political subdivision of the state.
- Requires a hearing loop for spaces intended for fifteen or more people.
- An exemption for a loop may be granted if a loop conflicts with other legal, project or cost requirements.
- **Your Support is Needed** Contact your state senator state representative and let them know you support this bill. Go to <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/>

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<sup>1</sup> [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/odhh/hearinglooss.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/odhh/hearinglooss.htm)