

I am writing to you on behalf of the Board of Directors and the membership of the Connecticut Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (CRID), which is Connecticut's nonprofit professional association of sign language and oral interpreters/transliterators for the Deaf.

CRID understands that the Governor's HB 6375 Section 2 (e) #6 looks to terminate the Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired (CDHI) by July 1, 2014, unless it re-establishes itself.

CRID wholeheartedly supports CDHI's efforts to advocate, strengthen, and implement state policies affecting Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals and their relationship to the public, industry, health care, and educational opportunities.

For 35 years CDHI has had a strong and unwavering interest in serving the over 298,000 Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals in Connecticut in community education and support. CDHI staff offers orientation seminars on deafness and deaf culture in which emergency/safety personnel, businesses, schools, and other interested parties have benefited from such presentations. CDHI staff have also served on Advisory Boards regarding a variety of issues including, but not limited to, early childhood intervention, mental health, education, workplace accessibility, multiculturalism and Deaf/Blind. In addition, CDHI employs certified sign language interpreters to provide communication access.

This past year CDHI joined with CRID, the Office of Protection and Advocacy (OPA), the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA), and many other entities to ensure communication access for Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals in hospitals. This "task force" has also recognized the need for more technically qualified professional interpreters in all aspects of our society and has established a number of areas in which we will be working closely together in an effort to collaboratively alleviate the critical shortage of interpreters.

We reiterate that we unreservedly support CDHI's efforts to continue to provide services to enhance the quality of community involvement and communication access for Connecticut's Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals.

Sincerely,

Tammy Boutin, CI and CT

CRID President