

## Daigle, Ben

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**From:** pattiwilson08@cox.net  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2009 5:10 PM  
**To:** Daigle, Ben  
**Cc:** pattiwilson08@cox.net  
**Subject:** Testimony by Patti Wilson, President, Connecticut Association of the Deaf; Governor's Bill # 6375 - Review and Termination of Certain Boards and Commissions

March 16, 2008

Honorable Gayle S. Slossberg and James F. Spallone, Co-Chairs and Members, Government Administration and Election Committee:

Good Mornng, I am Patti Wilson, President of the Connecticut Association of the Deaf. I am here today to express our appreciation for the services provided by the Commission for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired (CDHI). This state funded agency provides many ireplaceable services that allow approximately 300,000 deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind citizens who use American Sign Language (ASL) to function in today's complex society.

These critical services listed below involve working with judical system, police, local, state and federal agencies, schools, universities, hospitals and employers:

1. Coordination and provision of American Sign Language Interpreters
2. Deaf Sensitivity and Awareness Training to state and federal agencies, hospitals, universities, city health departments, etc. to help ensure access for deaf consumers
3. Coordinate services between state agencies for deaf consumers
4. Train local first responders to assist with deaf consumers in emergencies and disasters
5. Assist deaf consumers who have been denied SSDI or other benefits
6. Crisis intervention regarding any life situations that a deaf person cannot cope with due to language/communication barriers
7. Personal counseling in ASL
8. Coordinate Career Express services for deaf job seekers
9. Assist employers and deaf employees with job-related issues
10. Locate shelter for deaf homeless
11. Train 3rd year medical students at UCONN School of Medicine on appropriate use of interpreters
12. Work with the National Association of the Deaf on deaf issues and telecommunications barriers

These essential services for this low-incidence population enable the state of Connecticut to comply with various federal and state mandates, especially in the areas of communication access and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Accordingly, please do not terminate the Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired.

Thank you.