Connecticut General Assembly  Regarding Services to the DDBHOH Community
Sandra Inzinga, President  Connecticut Association of the Deaf

Good day

My name is Sandra Inzinga, as president of the Connecticut Association of the Deaf.

The state of Connecticut has a significant and prominent place in the history of Deaf America. Connecticut was the first state to establish a school for the deaf, a Commission on the Deaf, and telecommunication relay services. Connecticut was the second state in the nation to obtain grant funding to provide TTY’s and other adaptive equipment for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumers.

The Connecticut Association on the Deaf has been a partner in promoting, protecting and preserving the rights and quality of life of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Citizens of Connecticut for the past 80 years. We worked alongside the CT General Assembly to establish The Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired, and the Mental Health Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. We’ve been a partner to pass laws and legislations that assist with a Deaf Child’s rights, hearing aid insurance coverages, and Interpreter Qualifications and Standards

I myself have worked in the state of Connecticut serving Deaf, Deaf-Blind and hard of hearing citizens for well over 35 years. I’ve worked as a Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf with the State of CT and later as the Director of the Adult Vocational Services (AVS) program at the American School for the Deaf. I have been on numerous boards and task forces throughout my career working to assure that the deaf citizens of Connecticut have adequate and accessible services.

My program AVS, was closed due to lack of funding. Since it closed in 2015, communication accessible services for the Deaf, Deaf-Blind and hard of hearing have gradually declined in our state. The number of Community Rehabilitation programs that can work with DDBHOH consumers continues to decline, and many do not hire communication fluent staff to serve this population.
The State of Connecticut has continuously closed, or cut funding to services and programs. I have watched the significant accessible services and programs that I worked for during my 35 year career, be stopped, cut or closed.

With the closing of the Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired CT Deaf citizens have no advocates, counselor or consultants our deaf citizens continued to be denied access to public services readily available to the non-disabled population.

Other than a continuous series of legal suits, there seems to be no other way that DDBHOH citizens can continuously access services that should be readily available.

CT once, a leader in Deaf services, has fallen behind in our promotion of awareness, equality and accessibility to our Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens.

Thank you

Sandra Inzinga, CAD President

Branford CT