



STATE OF DELAWARE
STATE COUNCIL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
MARGARET M. O'NEILL BUILDING
410 FEDERAL STREET, SUITE 1
DOVER, DE 19901

VOICE: (302) 739-3620
TTY/TDD: (302) 739-3699
FAX: (302) 739-6704

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 6, 2010
TO: All Members of the Delaware State Senate
FROM: Ms. Daniese McMullin-Powell *OMP/RK*
Chairperson
State Council for Persons with Disabilities
RE: H.B. 345 [American Sign Language]

The State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) has reviewed H.B. 345 which recognizes American Sign Language (ASL) as a World Language for purposes of school curriculum. As background, in 2006, SCPD submitted comments on proposed Department of Education regulations amending high school graduation standards and recommended that the Department adopt a definition of "world language" which included ASL. The Department responded as follows:

The Department will be forming a committee to define World Language in the context of this regulation and the concerns will be included when the issue is discussed. The committee will certainly consider the inclusion of American Sign Language as part of the definition.

It is Council's understanding that the Department committee was formed and recommended inclusion of ASL in the definition of World Language.

SCPD strongly endorses the proposed bill. There is a considerable lack of qualified interpreters in Delaware. The legislation recognizes the prevalence of ASL usage and should result in prompting more students to pursue training as interpreters and educational interpreters.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact SCPD if you have any questions regarding our position on the proposed legislation.

cc: The Honorable Jack A. Markell
The Honorable Quinn Johnson
Council on Deaf & Hard of Hearing Equality
Delaware School for the Deaf
Center for Disabilities Studies
Mr. Brian Hartman, Esq.
Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens
Developmental Disabilities Council