

# Massachusetts State Association of the Deaf

P.O. Box 52097, Boston, Massachusetts, 02205

www.massdeaf.org ~ info@massdeaf.org

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June 12, 2017

Dear Madam Chairwoman and respected committee members,

The Massachusetts State Association of the Deaf (MSAD) held a community forum yesterday and discussed both S.173 and S.174. Commissioner Heidi Reed, from MCDHH, attended and answered many of our questions. Lee Nettles, from the Western Massachusetts Association of the Deaf and Hearing Impaired, (WMADHI) was also in attendance and shared valuable background information about the bills.

Based on the discussion at the community forum, the MSAD Board wants to go on the record as fully supporting S.173.

Also based on the discussion of the community, the MSAD Board conditionally supports S.174 and would recommend the following revisions before we can favorably support this bill:

- Section 2, Line 22, Beginning of paragraph, add: MCDHH will implement a community stakeholder group, from MSAD, MassRID, WMADHI and all other key Deaf and interpreter consumer and stakeholder groups statewide, to develop and approve the licensure regulations as the bill allows herein.
- Section 9, add: (5) Community stakeholder group, from MSAD, MassRID, WMADHI and all other key Deaf and interpreter consumer and stakeholder groups statewide, may determine the terms and conditions of short-term exceptions.
- Section 11, Line 99, insert the words “at least four community stakeholders and” between the words “with” and “the”... to read: MCDHH shall consult with at least four community stakeholders and the majority of interpreters....
- Add: Section 12: Operational funds of no less than \$350,000 shall be allocated to MCDHH to create this licensure program. Thereafter, a yearly allocation to MCDHH shall be awarded of not less than \$150,000.

If you have any questions about our position and/or recommendations, please contact me at [president@massdeaf.org](mailto:president@massdeaf.org).

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On behalf of the Deaf Community here in Massachusetts, we thank you for your interest and advocacy in this important protection for Deaf people.

Sincerely,



Andy Veith  
President

cc: Senator Welch, MassRID, WMADHI, MCDHH

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