



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Lisa Kornberg, Director
Governor's Office of the Deaf
and Hard of Hearing
410-767-1497

Buel Young
MVA Organization Relations
(410) 768-7386

**Maryland Motor
Vehicle Administration**
6601 Ritchie Highway, N.E.
Glen Burnie, Maryland 21062
1-800-950-1MVA (1682)
CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER
1-800-492-4575
TTY
www.marylandmva.com
WEB SITE

MARYLAND MOTOR VEHICLE ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING ANNOUNCE NEW HEARING WAIVER FOR EXPERIENCED COMMERCIAL DRIVERS

GLEN BURNIE, MD (October 27, 2008)-- The Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA), in partnership with the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH), today announced the creation of a hearing waiver for individuals who currently hold a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL). The waiver, which will apply to intrastate driving only, is the product of a joint effort between the MVA and ODHH in order to increase the employability and employment of individuals with hearing loss.

As part of the federal Department of Transportation (DOT) medical exam, all CDL holders must pass a hearing test upon renewal. States, however, have the ability to grant waivers for those who drive only within the state. "Constituents were contacting ODHH, concerned because they were losing their hearing and unsure whether they could pass the hearing test to keep their CDL," Lisa Kornberg, Director of ODHH, said. "For these people, one who had driven a rig for 35 years, the loss of their CDL meant losing their livelihood. When we brought the issue to the attention of the MVA, their staff began working on a solution almost immediately," Kornberg continued, "this is a victory for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community."

"Promoting mobility and safety for all road users is a core mission of the MVA," said John Kuo, MVA Administrator. "MVA recognizes the significance of mobility and transportation needs, and the impact of reduced mobility, so our effort with ODHH falls in line with our core mission," he added.

The waiver program will apply to experienced CDL holders who have lost their hearing and cannot pass the DOT hearing requirements. Those interested in applying for a waiver are required to complete the application, including information from their primary care physician or an Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist. The MVA began accepting waiver applications on October 20, 2008.

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About the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

The Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing was created in 2001 and exists to represent the Governor and his goal of promoting equal access for all Marylanders through providing expertise that enhances the general welfare of Maryland's deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind residents.

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