



ODHH Monthly Bulletin

March 2011

A message from Director Lisa Kornberg

Wow. What a month it has been! From testifying on bills that impact the quality of life of Marylanders with hearing loss to hosting our Second Annual Legislative Day, February has been a busy month. I continue to be humbled by the level of support ODHH receives from legislators, state agencies, constituents, and stakeholders. This year is the Ten Year Anniversary of the establishment of ODHH, but more importantly, it marks a ten-year partnership between all of us to advance the rights of people with hearing loss in Maryland.

So thank you for working to advance our shared vision of equal and full access for Maryland's deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind residents. I look forward to continuing our partnerships for the next ten years and beyond.

-Lisa

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Second Annual Legislative Day and 10 Year Anniversary Celebration a Success



On February 21, ODHH hosted its Second Annual Deaf and Hard of Hearing Legislative Awareness Day. As part of the event, ODHH also celebrated its Ten Year Anniversary.

Over 80 people were in attendance for the day's events, which started with an advocacy training to familiarize participants with the legislative process. The training was followed by a tour of the State House. The highlight of the event was the Welcome Ceremony and Awards

Presentation, with keynote remarks by Lt. Governor Anthony Brown.

During the Awards Presentation, ODHH celebrated its 10-Year history by recognizing those who have contributed to the establishment and success of the Office. Along this vein, Governor O'Malley issued a proclamation creating the Kelby Brick Community Leadership Award, which was created in honor of a passionate community leader who was integral in the establishment of ODHH. The inaugural award was presented to Mr. Brick at the ceremony.

Some of the cosponsors of the ODHH enabling were present to celebrate the 10 year anniversary of the Office - Senator John Astle, Senator Donald Elliott, Senator Lisa Gladden, Senator Katherine Klausmeier, and Delegate Shirley Nathan-Pulliam. We are grateful for their continued support.

Finally, we recognized two outstanding legislators who showed leadership in advancing the rights of people with hearing loss in Maryland - Councilmember



IRS Tax Tips Series - in ASL with Captions and Voice Over

The Internal Revenue Service has produced a video series of Tax Tips that give concise information about a variety of topics. All videos are under three minutes in length and are fully accessible through American Sign Language, Captions, and Voice Over. To view them, visit the IRS's YouTube channel at:

<http://www.youtube.com/irsvidEOSasL>

Examples of videos posted are:

- Do I Have to File a Tax Return?
- Tax Season Delayed for Some Tax Payers
- W-2 Missing?
- IRS e-File 2011
- Free IRS Tax Help
- and more!

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Craig Rice and Delegate Kevin Kelly.

After the presentation, participants were able to meet with their legislators one-on-one. During the House General Session, Speaker Busch invited the ODHH staff to join him as he read a Resolution in honor of ODHH's Ten Year Anniversary.

The event was a tremendous success. Thank you to all of the legislators, volunteers, and participants who made it possible. We look forward to seeing you all at our Third Annual Legislative Day next year! Photos of the Lt. Governor will be posted on Maryland.gov soon.

ODHH on the Move

Advisory Council Meeting

Tuesday, March 1
11 AM - 2 PM
MDOT Headquarters
Hanover, MD

Legislative Updates



Captioning of Political Ads

Senate Bill 22 is still in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Contact your senator today and ask that he or she act on this important legislation.

Meanwhile, Delegate Hogan introduced House Bill 1000, which, like SB 22, would require that candidates for Governor, Lt. Governor,

Comptroller, and Attorney General make their campaign advertisements accessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing. ODHH presented testimony in favor of the bill on Tuesday, February 22. Contact your delegates and ask that they support HB 1000.

Internet Access

Earlier this month, landmark legislation was introduced in Maryland related to access to the Internet. Senate Bill 596/House Bill 580 would require that the Internet website of a business that provides goods and services to anyone in Maryland be accessible to people with disabilities, including people who are deaf or hard of hearing. This means that if a business is posting videos online, those videos would have to be captioned. The law will apply only to those businesses that earn over \$1 million per year.

The hearing in the Senate is scheduled from March 2 at 1 PM. The hearing in the House is scheduled for March 9 at 1 PM.

Hearing Aid Loan Bank

Senate Bill 754/House Bill 1013 would establish a permanent Hearing Aid Loan Bank in the State. The Hearing Aid Loan Bank was created as a bridge between newborn hearing screening and early intervention. Its purpose is to provide infants and toddlers under the age of three years immediate access to hearing aids following confirmation of hearing loss by an audiologist. A six-month loan period may be granted to provide the parents, or legal guardians of infants and toddlers, adequate time to secure permanent amplification through personal resources, insurance, or community assistance programs.

The hearing in the Senate is scheduled from March 2 at 1 PM. The hearing in the House is scheduled for March 16 at 1 PM.

ODHH Budget

Finally, ODHH's budget hearings are now over. The Governor's budget supported the current programs and staff of the Office. The Department of Legislative Services has agreed with the Governor's budget for our Office. The General Assembly's decision regarding the ODHH budget will be made in the next few weeks.

If you are interested in submitting testimony either in writing or in person, or if you have any questions or comments, please see <http://odhh.maryland.gov/contact.html> or contact Julie Anne Schafer at jschafer@gov.state.md.us.

Questions? Comments? Contact:

Julie Anne Schafer, Esq.
Assistant Director
Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
217 E. Redwood Street, Suite 1300
Baltimore, MD 21202
410-767-7793 (voice)
443-453-5954 (VP)
jschafer@gov.state.md.us
<http://www.odhh.maryland.gov/>

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