

tors of motor vehicles are having much difficulty in securing motor vehicle liability insurance to cover them in the operation of their motor vehicles.

Motor vehicle insurance is practically a necessity in modern society. The State of Maryland has recognized this fact in its laws on financial responsibility, making it extremely difficult for motorists to operate their motor vehicles if they do not have proper insurance coverage.

Many studies made by persons and organizations interested in the deaf have demonstrated that these drivers are among the best of all motor vehicle operators. Thus, an experiment with deaf drivers in the State of Pennsylvania showed that they had compiled an amazingly accident-free driving record. This study indicated that among more than 3,000 deaf drivers who are licensed in the State of Pennsylvania, no one of them had been involved in a serious accident, causing personal injury or death.

Many states, including Maryland, permit the licensing of deaf drivers. It is unfortunate and ironic that after being permitted to obtain motor vehicle operating licenses and after having compiled good operating and safety records, they then have difficulty in motor vehicle insurance.

A country-wide judgment of motor vehicle administrators and licensing officials throughout all fifty states and the District of Columbia showed these results: four administrators stated flatly that the deaf are among our best drivers; nineteen administrators adjudged deaf drivers to be above average in safe driving ability; twenty-four of these officials stated that in their opinion deaf drivers are average in driving ability; two jurisdictions voiced no opinions, and only one administrator stated that deaf drivers are below average in driving ability.

Some years ago, the Superintendent of the Lexington School for the Deaf in New York City summarized a number of studies that have been made in the United States during the past twenty years concerning licensing of deaf drivers. The general studies indicated:

1. That impairment of hearing does not seem to be an important contributing cause of automobile accidents.
2. That the deaf as a group are very careful drivers.
3. That their accident record is exceptionally good.
4. That motor vehicle administrators and others responsible for the licensing of deaf drivers do not regard deaf drivers as any particular hazard.
5. That by far the greater number of warning signals are received through the eyes. (This statement was advanced in a study made by the AAA which found that 97 per cent of warning signals were visually received.)
6. That hearing aids do not necessarily correct a hearing loss while driving inasmuch as most people wearing hearing aids turn them off while the car is in motion due to noise and other disturbance.