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Annapolis, Maryland.

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No. 65

(House Joint Resolution 83)

A House Joint Resolution concerning

Deafness

FOR the purpose of requesting that a greater awareness be shown for the concerns and needs of people with hearing loss.

Among the major handicapping conditions, deafness is probably the least understood. This is true, at least in part, because of the fact that deafness strikes at one of the most fundamental things that people do... this is, communicate.

Deafness tends to be an invisible handicap and its impact upon the individual is little appreciated or understood by the public-at-large.

Traditionally, one of the major problems facing deaf people has been the lack of public understanding which results in a relative insensitivity to the basic needs and the special needs of this unique population.

Lack of public awareness and understanding also permits subtle, as well as overt discrimination... discrimination that affects almost all areas of a deaf person's life; social, economic, educational, etc.

The basic needs of deaf people are: television channels, including special programs designed for deaf audiences and regular programs which could be interpreted or captioned;

Regular news programs on commercial television which are captioned or interpreted in the Language of Signs for deaf persons, including the captioning or interpreting of all emergency bulletins being aired on television;

A greater awareness of the necessity for having a skilled interpreter present in all court