

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

23-29

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

March 5, 2019

To recognize and celebrate Deaf History Month by promoting awareness of American deaf history and culture, increasing awareness of deaf people in the District of Columbia, celebrating their sign languages and cultures, and recognizing the need for their inclusion as equal members of the community, and to declare March 13 through April 15, 2019, as “Deaf History Month” in the District of Columbia.

WHEREAS, National Deaf History Month celebrates deaf history and the contributions of the hearing impaired and deaf community to American society;

WHEREAS, on April 15, 1817, The American School for the Deaf, the first permanent public school for the deaf, opened its doors in Hartford, Connecticut;

WHEREAS, on April 8, 1864, President Lincoln signed a charter establishing Gallaudet University as the first college for the deaf;

WHEREAS, on March 13, 1988, the “Deaf President Now” movement succeeded in having I. King Jordan named the first deaf president of Gallaudet University;

WHEREAS, National Deaf History Month was the creation of 2 deaf employees at Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library in Washington, D.C.;

WHEREAS, in 1996, the National Association of the Deaf (“NAD”) suggested the week become a full-fledged month, and in 1997, March 13 through April 15, the first annual, nationwide National Deaf History Month was celebrated;

WHEREAS, in 2006, the American Library Association and NAD announced that March 13 to April 15 is National Deaf History Month;

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WHEREAS, the District of Columbia is proudly home to one of the largest concentrations of deaf and hard-of-hearing people in the United States;

WHEREAS, in October 2018, Starbucks opened its first “Signing Store” for the deaf and hard-of-hearing on the H Street corridor in Washington, D.C., signifying the District as a national deaf hub;

WHEREAS, nearly 11.5 million Americans have some sort of hearing impairment, ranging from difficulty in hearing conversation to total hearing loss;

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia’s Department on Disability Services provides advocacy for communication access, deaf culture and awareness, and necessary services to people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind; and

WHEREAS, Deaf History Month is an opportunity to honor and celebrate the history, culture, and essential role of the deaf community in the District of Columbia and across the country.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Deaf History Month Recognition Resolution of 2019”.

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia recognizes the contributions of the hearing impaired and deaf community to the District of Columbia and the United States and declares March 13 through April 15, 2019, as “Deaf History Month” in the District of Columbia.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the District of Columbia Register.