

February 13, 2026

Dear Members of the Legislature,

Testimonial in Support of Renaming the Governor's Office and Advisory Council to Include "DeafBlind" – HB439

My name is Blaise Delahoussaye, and I am a proud Marylander who is DeafBlind. I am writing to you today to provide my personal testimony and urge your support for the DeafBlind community across Maryland.

As someone who is DeafBlind, I face significant barriers to everyday tasks and essential services. The programs and resources needed to support accessibility for people like me are often limited or unavailable due to insufficient funding. Too often, our unique needs are overlooked or redirected to other sources, leaving us exhausted from constantly advocating for ourselves. This ongoing struggle highlights the urgent need for our community to be recognized and supported at all levels of state government.

This ongoing situation demonstrates the critical need for our community to be acknowledged and supported at the highest levels of state government.

Recognition is vital. By explicitly including "DeafBlind" in the title of the Governor's Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, our existence is validated, our needs are more likely to be addressed, and our inclusion is promoted. I respectfully ask for your support in ensuring that DeafBlind Marylanders are made visible in all state agencies and facilities, and that we receive equitable access and opportunities throughout the state.

I urge you to take this important step and add "DeafBlind" to the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, renaming it as the Governor's Office of the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing. Your endorsement will help ensure that our community is finally recognized and receives the accessibility and inclusion we rightfully deserve.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and your ongoing commitment to building a more inclusive Maryland.

Sincerely,

Blaise Delahoussaye, DeafBlind Maryland resident and representative for Metro Washington Association of the DeafBlind (MWADB)

12109 Portree Drive
Rockville, MD 20852