

2/21/2025

Dear Delegate Ben Barnes, House Appropriations Committee

My name is Crystal Tziallila Vogler. I am a Deaf signing resident in Rockville, Maryland. I hold a bachelor of Science in Computer Science from the National and Capodistrian University of Athens, Greece and a Master of Science in Deaf Education from McDaniel College, MD, and I have work experience in teaching and instructional design. Currently, I am the founder of Artistanda, LLC. My business concept is addressing a real need for accessibility in literacy and education.

I strongly support HB0678 and DCDL funding for two main reasons. First, without the DCDL support, books designed for Deaf people are very expensive. There are many Deaf people that recently lost federal jobs and so they need to continue educating themselves by reading books provided by DCDL. Second, the DCDL website is important for parents, educators of Deaf kids, and members of the Deaf community, because it houses and curates educational and community websites. Nowadays, language deprivation is a hot topic of discussion in the Deaf community. Without the DCDL website, it is hard to locate educational materials and events on the Internet for Deaf kids.

The DCDL has impacted me through ASL learning, and eBooks. Because I recently added consultation services to my business, I had to train myself by studying eBooks about Deaf Education and ASL instruction from the DCDL.

I strongly believe that increased funding is needed to sustain and expand these crucial services. Because I am Deaf myself, I am interested in communicating with the Deaf folks at the DCDL. For example, I plan to host ASL storytimes in person and virtually, and so I will need to follow up with the Deaf employees of the DCDL. For example, I would like to know which children's books are allowed for digital storytimes and also to discuss teaching strategies with these employees.

Sincerely,
Crystal Tziallila Vogler