**Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

**Statewide Advisory Council Meeting**

**600 Washington Street**
**December 10, 2020**

**6:15 – 8:15 pm**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Participants:**
Acting Commissioner Tricia Ford, MCDHH

**SAC Members:**
Brock Cordeiro
Michelle Motta Dardeno, Chair
Stephanie Hakulin
Ellen Perkins
Linda Sakin
Lori Seidman

**Attendees from Community:**
Colleen Arons, EHS
Lesli Baker Johnson, MCB
Brennan Bulger, Bristol County Sheriff’s Office, Canine Officer
Lisa Chiango
Michelle Cline, NAD
Diane Crouse, MCDHH
Commissioner David D’Arcangelo, MCB
Carla Del Pizzo
Melissa Dowler, MCDHH
Karin Eddy, MCDHH
Shana Gibbs, MSAD
Kellynette Gomez
Emily Graves-Harrison, MCDHH
Sharon Harrison, MCDHH
Carla Kath, MCB
Karran Larson, MCDHH
Jon LeJeune
Carol Menton, MCDHH
Ruth Moore, WMAD
Lee Nettles, Advocate
John Oliveira, Deputy Commissioner, MCB
Terri Pancare, MCDHH
Shannon Silvestri, MCDHH
Ivy Velez, DDS
Aurora Wilber, MCDHH
Lori Whynot
BJ Wood, MSAD

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| **Agenda Topic** | **Discussion** | **Follow up/Person Responsible** |
| Welcome  | * Communication Procedures
* Introductions
* Review of Agenda
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| Review of Minutes from November 12, 2020 |  | Approved |
| Chairperson’s Report | * Names of interested people to serve on the SAC are accepted at any time. Seat terms and re-appointments have no set period of time for submittal.
* Biography of SAC members will be expected by Feb. Members should include any information of comfort. These will be used within SAC members to get to know one another better and identify special areas of interest.
* Potential SAC topic for a presentation: scientific research advances. For example: genetic therapy, tinnitus treatments, etc.
 | People interested in serving on the SAC should connect with Michelle Motta Dardeno or Hana Hanigan. If SAC members have interest, a vlog could be filmed to recruit for members to offer expectations of serving and information on the application process.Due: Feb. SAC bios.Linda Sakin will share the article out of the Iowa University on Hearing Health.Michelle will connect with a contact with Mass Eye and Ear to potentially have research shared with SAC. |
| Commissioner’s Report | * A vlog will soon be released starring Ruth and Wynn Moore regarding self-care for elders.
* Collaboration with MCB includes guidance on access issues, text transcripts accompany vlogs and DeafBlind community members serve on the SAC. Case Managers, from both agencies, will be meeting to identify gaps in services. Communication access requests (Jan. 2020 – Oct. 2020) were 357 with an 88% fill rate.
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| Presentation: MCB: Commissioner David D’Arcangelo, Deputy Commissioner John Oliveira and Director of the DeafBlind Unit Lesli Baker Johnson | * MCB’s Council: Statewide Advisory Council for the Blind (SAB.)
* Commissioner D’Arcangelo was previously the Director of the Massachusetts’ Office on Disability (MOD), essentially, the ADA Coordinator of the Executive Branch.
* As Commissioner of MCB, responsibilities include keeping all staff and consumers of MCB safe during the pandemic.
* MCB was established in 1906 and is the oldest social service agency. Helen Keller was one of the agency’s first Commissioners.
* In the MA Law, MCB’s mission is to get people with blindness employed; other services have been added since MCB was established.
* Services have expanded to include Vocational Rehab for the path to employment, orientation and mobility, assistive technology, etc.
* Obligations from Federal grants and funding include: DeafBlind line items: the Turning 22 Program and DeafBlind Community Access Network (DBCAN.) DBCAN budget is $534,000. The budget for Turning 22 (congregate care and residential consumers) is 13 million. Through these programs, MCB has collaborated with MCDHH and community partners (DEAF, Inc., Helen Keller National Center, etc.) Funds are used to pay for two areas: Social Rehab Services or Vocational Rehab.
* MCDHH’s role is focused on effective communication and provision of communication access.
* Media and community events:

\* MCB has hosted a number Town Hall’s offering full accessibility for Deaf, DeafBlind and hard of hearing participants. \* “[Feeling through the Experience](https://www.feelingthrough.com/)” was created by Doug Roland and includes a DeafBlind actor portraying a DeafBlind individual.\* WGBY, Springfield: “Connecting Point” highlighted MCB programs.\* Highlighting the successes of DeafBlind consumers: Kerry Thompson (SAC member) was the keynote speaker at the MCB Sept. Staff meeting. “[Making Music Together](https://www.mass.gov/news/making-music-together-the-cheryl-levasseur-and-glenn-lavallee-story)” was an event by Cheryl and Glenn Levasseur.* RFR search for supporting magnification needs of DeafBlind consumers for devices.
* DeafBlind Unit includes six counselors, Unit Director and a Social Work Assistant. The six regions are: Springfield/Western MA, Central/Worcester, NE, Metro Boston, SE-Cape and Islands, Boston/Brookline. Average caseload is 80 – 100 clients. Since the beginning of the pandemic (March) counselors have connected with DeafBlind consumers monthly for updates and check-ins for any concerns or unmet needs.
 | Lesli Baker Johnson, with Lori Seidman (and other representatives), will meet to discuss specific gaps in services, cultural gaps, barriers and improving cross agency collaborative efforts.Once the pandemic has reached a resolution, MCB is committed to re-establish connections to hospitals and the medical profession for greater training in providing services to DeafBlind individuals. Commissioner D’Arcangelo and his staff will work with Jon LeJeune to revive those efforts. |
| Presentation: Karran Larson, Statewide Coordinator for Substance Use and Recovery | * Formerly, licensed mental health and addiction counselor, MCDHH Children’s Specialist, now leading as Statewide Coordinator for Substance Use and Recovery.
* Since 2016, working on establishing Recovery Coaches to support a client’s recovery and addiction.
* Core values of the person in recovery provide the direction the support will take. The Recovery Coaches assist in breaking down barriers, ensure pathways for healthier living and clean lifestyle. The focus is on addiction and developing resources towards recovery.
* Currently there are 13 certified Deaf Recovery Coaches (DRCs.) Funding is from the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS) under the Dept. of Public Health (DPH.)
* Peer Specialists talks about lived experience with addiction and mental health problems; DRCs are sometimes peers, sometimes allies.
* The program is looking to expand the diversity with the DRCs to include members of the BIPOC population, DeafBlind individuals, etc. The team is working to recruit, serve and represent more of the diversity within the Deaf and hard of hearing community.
* A current focus is on prevention education; this includes vlogs, materials, recovery meetings, parent groups, assisting pregnant mothers, etc.
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| Presentation: Melissa Dowler, Boston Children’s Specialist and Emily Graves-Harrison, Western Children’s Specialist | * Four Children’s Specialists: Berkshires and Western Region: Emily Graves-Harrison, Central: Terri Pancare, SE: Melissa Adams, NE/Boston: Melissa Dowler.
* Children served are any kids with any range of hearing loss.
* Staff experience includes: Early Intervention (EI), adult transition, social work, education, special education, etc.
* The main focus area is the acquisition of language. Activities that support that focus are supporting parents with a diagnosis, guiding parents through the education system, attending IEP meetings, navigate resources, etc.
* Referrals to Children’s Specialists can come from any area: family, EI, doctors, schools, etc.
* When the child is 14, along with the Children’s Specialist, they work to create a Individual Transition Plan. When the child is turning 22 or graduating from high school, the case may transition to one of MCDHH’s Adult Case Managers. This may include referrals to Independent Living Centers, Chapter 688 or other referrals.
* Statistics: 2008: 680 open cases, 2015: more than 1000, 2020: over 1500.
* In connection to the recent Dept. of Children and Families (DCF) settlement, MCDHH will be reconvening a working group with DCF to increase outreach to community members with interest in providing foster care or adoption. Trainings will be discussed for DHILS centers on the process for involvement in the foster care system.
 | PowerPoint presentation will be attached to the email with the meeting minutes. Upcoming: vlog on Case Management services. |
| Next SAC Meeting | * January 14, 2021, 6:15 – 8:15. Agenda will include Brock’s review of the “Bills of Interest.”
* SAC “Bills of Interest” are at the end of these minutes.
 | Any interested community members wanting SAC information can request to join the distribution list. Please email: ami.hanigan@mass.gov.SAC members with requests for additions to the future agendas should share these additions with ami.hanigan@mass.gov. |

**Legislation of Interest to the Constituents of**

**the**

**Statewide Advisory Council**

**to the**

**Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

**191st General Court (2019-2020)**

***Updated 12/09/2020
@ approximately 9:30 AM***

31 Bills currently tracking

1. **S.198: Licensure of interpreters and oral transliterators** (Senator [James Welch](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/JTW0/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S198>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J17)

***Latest Activity: On 2/13/2020 the bill accompanied a study order, see*** [***S.2534***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S2534)

Purpose: Requires all interpreters and oral transliterators serving the Deaf to be licensed by MCDHH

1. **S.197: Protects consumers of sign language and oral interpretation** (Senator [James Welch](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/JTW0/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S197>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J17)
***Latest Activity: On 5/7/2020 the bill was reported favorably by the Joint Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure and referred to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means.***

Purpose: Clarifies the definition of “qualified interpreter”

1. **S.305: Language Readiness for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children entering Kindergarten** (Senator [Eric Lesser](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/EPL0/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S305>
Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Education](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J14/191)

***Latest Activity: On 2/18/2020 the bill accompanied a study order, see*** [***S.2538***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S2538)

Purpose: Requires the Department of Public Health and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to establish language development milestones for Deaf and hard of hearing children from birth to age 5, provide parents with resources and track development data

1. **H.3550: Readiness for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children entering Kindergarten** (Representative [Brian Ashe](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/BMA1/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H3550>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Education](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J14/191)

***Latest Activity: On 12/03/2020 Accompanied a study order, see*** [***H.5159***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H5159)

Purpose: Requires the Department of Public Health and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to establish language development milestones for Deaf and hard of hearing children from birth to age 5, provide parents with resources and track development data

1. **S.1824: Removing the term hearing impaired from the General Laws** (Senator [Cynthia Stone Creem](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/CSC0/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S1824>

Status: Referred favorably to the [***Senate Committee on Rules***](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/S29/191)

***Latest Activity: On 01/06/2020 the bill was reported favorably by committee and referred to the committee on*** [***Senate Rules***](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/S29/191)

Purpose: Would replace the term “hearing impaired” with “deaf or hard of hearing” in the General Laws

1. **S.597: Providing coverage for hearing aids** (Senator [Adam Hinds](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/AGH0/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S597>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Financial Services](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J11)

***Latest Activity: On 2/18/2020 the bill accompanied a study order, see*** [***S.2543***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S2543)

Purpose: Coverage for the cost of 1 hearing aid per hearing-impaired ear up to $500 and 80 percent coverage of the next $1,500 for each hearing aid, every 36 months

1. **S.1738: Tax credit for the purchase of hearing aids** (Senator [Patrick O’Connor](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/PMO/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S1738>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Revenue](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J26)
***Latest Activity: On 2/27/2020 the bill was reported favorably by committee and referred to the committee on*** [***House Ways and Means***](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/H34/191)

Purpose: Up to $1500 in tax credits for the purchase of hearing aids by people aged 55 or above. Allowed once every four years

1. **S.1643: Tax abatement for Deaf residents** (Senator [Diana DiZoglio](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/D_D0/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S1643>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Revenue](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J26)
***Latest Activity: On 2/20/2020 the bill accompanied a study order, see*** [***S.2549***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S2549)

Purpose: Allows a tax abatement for Deaf homeowners

1. **S.540: Providing coverage for hearing aids for persons with sensory impairedness** (Senator [Joseph Boncore](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/JAB0/191)\*)

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S540>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Financial Services](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J11)

***Latest Activity: On 2/18/2020 the bill accompanied a study order, see*** [***S.2543***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S2543)

Purpose: Coverage for the cost of 1 hearing aid per hearing-impaired ear up to $500 and 80 percent coverage of the next $1,500 for each hearing aid, every 24 months. Would apply to people covered under the Group Insurance Commission who are also blind or have a severe vision loss

1. **S.683: Medicare for all in Massachusetts** (Senator [James Eldridge](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/JBE0/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S683>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Health Care Financing](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J24)
***Latest Activity: On 7/23/2020 the Senate Ought NOT to pass (under Joint Rule 10) and placed in the Orders of the Day for the next session***Purpose: Would require the coverage of hearing aids, also called single payer

1. **H.1194: Medicare for all in Massachusetts** Representatives [Lindsay Sabadosa](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/L_S1/191) & [Denise Garlick](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/DCG1/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H1194>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Health Care Financing](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J24)

***Latest Activity: On 6/22/2020 the House - Reporting date extended to Thursday December 31, 2020, pending concurrence***Purpose: Would require the coverage of hearing aids, also called single payer

1. **H.276: Increased access to hearing aids** (Representative [James Kelcourse](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/JMK1/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H276>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J17)

***Latest Activity: On 01/21/2020 the bill accompanied a new draft, see*** [***H.4298***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H4298)

Purpose: Preventing or regulating financial interest in hearing aid companies by physician prescribing hearing aids; requiring full disclosure of fees for hearing aids and associated services Allows ENTs to dispense hearing aids

1. **H.236: Increased access to hearing aids** (Representative [Carole Fiola](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/CAF1/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H236>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J17)

***Latest Activity: On 01/21/2020 the bill accompanied a new draft, see*** [***H.4298***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H4298)Purpose: Preventing or regulating financial interest in hearing aid companies by physician prescribing hearing aids; requiring full disclosure of fees for hearing aids and associated services Allows ENTs to dispense hearing aids

1. **S.151: Increased access to hearing aids** (Senator [Adam Hinds](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/AGH0/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S151>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J17)

***Latest Activity: On 01/21/2020 the bill accompanied a new draft, see*** [***H.4298***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H4298)

Purpose: Preventing or regulating financial interest in hearing aid companies by physician prescribing hearing aids; requiring full disclosure of fees for hearing aids and associated services Allows ENTs to dispense hearing aids

1. **S.139: Increased access to hearing aids** (Senator [Diana DiZoglio](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/D_D0/191))

[https://malegislaturegov/Bills/191/S139](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S139)

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J17)

***Latest Activity: On 01/21/2020 the bill accompanied a new draft, see*** [***H.4298***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H4298)

Purpose: Preventing or regulating financial interest in hearing aid companies by physician prescribing hearing aids; requiring full disclosure of fees for hearing aids and associated services Allows ENTs to dispense hearing aids

1. **H.142: Creating a means for tracking the unmet need of individuals with developmental disabilities in Massachusetts** (Representative [Jason Lewis](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/JPL1/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H142>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J13)
***Latest Activity: On 03/05/2020 the bill accompanied a new draft, see*** [***H.4496***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H4496)

Purpose: Establishing a central electronic database using data from MCDHH among others This database would track the unmet service needs of individuals with developmental disabilities in MA

1. **H.2855: Providing hearing and visual aids to deaf and blind viewers** (Representative [Ann-Margaret Ferrante](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/AMF1/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H2855>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J37)

***Latest Activity: On 2/10/2020 the bill accompanied a study order, see*** [***H.4405***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/h4405)

Purpose: Would require community antenna television stations to provide captions for the Deaf and narration for the blind

1. **H.1487: Prohibiting discrimination against adults with disabilities in family and juvenile court proceedings** (Representative [Kay Khan](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/K_K1/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H1487>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on the Judiciary](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J19)

***Latest Activity: On 11/25/2020 in the House, Accompanied a study order, see*** [***H.5148***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H5148)

Purpose: Prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability in family/juvenile court proceedings, absent a specific written finding

1. **S.983: Prohibiting discrimination against adults with disabilities in family and juvenile court proceedings** (Senator[Joan Lovely](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/JBL0/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S983>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on the Judiciary](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J19)
***Latest Activity: On 11/16/2020 in the House, Accompanied a study order, see*** [***S.2953***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S2953)

Purpose: Prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability in family/juvenile court proceedings, absent a specific written finding

1. **H.2057: American Sign Language Training** (Representative [Shawn Dooley](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/S_D1/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H2057>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J22)

***Latest Activity: On 02/24/2020 the bill was reported favorably by committee and referred to the committee on*** [***House Ways and Means***](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/H34/191)

Purpose: Establishment of training and on-going education courses that allow for basic understanding of American Sign Language by all levels of fire service personnel

1. **H.2954: Providing improved access to taxicabs for persons with disabilities** (Representative [Bruce Ayers](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/BJA1/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H2954>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Transportation](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J27)

***Latest Activity: On 02/18/2020 the bill was reported favorably by committee and referred to the committee on*** [***House Ways and Means***](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/H34/191)

Purpose: Requiring accessible taxicabs to include an assistive listening system if an intercom, video, or audio system is installed

1. **S.1810: An Act relative to employment of persons with disabilities on state contracts** (Senator[Nick Collins](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/N_C0/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S1810>

Status: Referred to the [Senate Committee on Ways and Means](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/S30/191)

***Latest Activity: On 12/04/2019 the bill accompanied by*** [***H.2671***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H2671) ***& Bill reported favorably by committee and referred to the committee on*** [***Senate Ways and Means***](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/S30)Purpose: Would require that companies receiving state contracts employ at least 10% of people with disabilities on that contract

1. **H.929: An Act requiring reimbursement for the costs of providing competent interpreter services** (Senator[Gerard Cassidy](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/G_C2/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H929>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Financial Services](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J11)
***Latest Activity: On 12/01/2020* in the House, Accompanied a study order, see** [**H.5160**](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H5160)Purpose: Would require that the costs of providing competent interpreter services through sign and spoken languages by licensed facilities shall be recognized and separately reimbursed by the division and its contracted health insurers, health plans, health maintenance organizations, behavioral health management firms and third party contractors under contract to a division managed care organization or primary care clinician program.

1. **S.922: An Act relative to juvenile violence** (Senator [Diana DiZoglio](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/D_D0/191)\*)

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S922>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on the Judiciary](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J19)

***Latest Activity: On 02/03/2020 the bill accompanied a study order, see***[***S.2496***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S2496)

Purpose: In part, it would “In the case of a blind or deaf/blind or a student with developmental and communication challenges, they shall have one free pull on the door to indicate that the door to the lavatory stall is either in use or not. If the aforementioned developmentally, or blind, or deaf/blind or communication disabled student pulls the door and finds that he/she cannot open the lavatory stall, said lavatory stall shall be presumed to be ‘occupied,’ by another student or person and that said challenged student must go to his/her care staff, who shall in turn, depending on the urgency of the challenged student needing a lavatory, allow for the challenged student to use their designated lavatory, so long as both the student and the caretaker is of the same gender.”

1. **H.2671: An Act relative to the employment of persons with disabilities on state contracts** (Representative[David Biele](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/D_B1/191) & Representative [Daniel Hunt](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/djh1/191))

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H2671>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J25)
***Latest Activity: On 12/4/2019 the bill accompanied*** [***S.1810***](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S1810)

Purpose: Would require that companies receiving state contracts employ at least 10% of people with disabilities on that contract

1. **H.4298: Increased access to hearing aids** (Joint Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure) New draft of [S.139](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S139), [S.151](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S151), [H.236](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H236) and [H.276](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H276)

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H4298>
Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Health Care Financing](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J24/191)
***Latest Activity: On 08/20/2020 the House - Ought NOT to pass (under Joint Rule 10) and placed in the Orders of the Day for the next sitting, the question being on acceptance & ordered to a third reading***Purpose: Preventing or regulating financial interest in hearing aid companies by physician prescribing hearing aids; requiring full disclosure of fees for hearing aids and associated services Allows ENTs to dispense hearing aids

1. **H.4496: An Act establishing a permanent Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities** ([Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J13)) New draft of [H88](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H88), [H100](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H100), [H142](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H142), [H161](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H161) and [H3752](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H3752)

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H4496>

Status: Referred to the [Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J13)
***Latest Activity: On 03/05/2020 bill reported favorably by committee and referred to the committee on*** [***House Ways and Means***](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/H34/191)

Purpose: Creating a new permanent Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities

1. **H.5159: Study Order - Education Matters** ([Joint Committee on Education](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J14/191)) New draft of [H.3550](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H3550) & others
<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H5159>
Status: Referred to the Referred to [House Committee on Rules](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/H33/191)
***Latest Activity: On 12/03/2020 Discharged to the committee on*** [***House Rules***](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/H33/191)
2. **H.5148: Study Order - Judiciary Matters** ([Joint Committee on the Judiciary](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J19/191)) New draft of [H.1487](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H1487) & others
<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H5148>
Status: Referred to the Referred to [House Committee on Rules](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/H33/191)
***Latest Activity: On 11/25/2020 Discharged to the committee on*** [***House Rules***](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/H33/191)
3. [**S.2953**](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S2953)**: Order relative to authorizing the joint committee on the Judiciary to make an investigation and study of certain current Senate documents relative to judiciary issues** ([Joint Committee on the Judiciary](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J19/191)) New draft of [S.983](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S983) & others
<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S2953>
Status: Referred to the Referred to [Senate Committee on Rules](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/S29/191)
***Latest Activity: On 11/19/2020 Discharged to the committee on*** [***Senate Rules***](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/S29/191)
4. **H.5160: Study Order - payments and insurance** ([Joint Committee on Financial Services](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J11/191)) New draft of  [H.929](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H929) & others
<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H5160>
Status: Referred to the Referred to [House Committee on Rules](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/H33/191)
***Latest Activity: On 12/01/2020 Discharged to the committee on*** [***House Rules***](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/H33/191)
Editor’s note: H: stands for the House and S: for the Senate

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In parentheses ( ) is the bill’s sponsor. \* denotes that the presenter is not a sponsor of this legislation

For more information or to share your perspective about a bill of interest, please follow up and contact your legislator and/or the sponsor of the bill Contact information can be found at [www.malegislature.gov](https://www.malegislature.gov)

For more information on the process of how bills are filed and then become law:

<https://malegislature.gov/Content/Documents/HowAnIdeaBecomesLaw/HowAnIdeaBecomesLaw.pdf>

*Many thanks go to the Statewide Advisory Council which meets to discuss the nature of these bills, State House Day and other initiatives as set forth by MCDHH and related collaborations. For information, please contact SAC Member Brock N. Cordeiro at* *BNCordeiro@comcast.net**.*