

March 4, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee
c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov
Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a parapro in the KentISD Oral Deaf Program. I am also a parent to 3 children who have Usher's Syndrome (Vision and hearing loss) who went through our program. Our program teaches children who are D/HH to use Spoken Language through listening. It is in this capacity that **I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

For HB 5777 to serve all children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families, equal and adequate representation of the different approaches to language learning should be reflected in the choice of advisory committee members. **As written, this bill gives ASL advocates a majority on the advisory committee.** Only a small percentage of Deaf and Hard of Hearing children use ASL as their primary method of communication: a 2010 study by Gallaudet University showed that, at that time in Michigan, **13% of students used sign language including ASL compared to 79.4 % who used Spoken Language and 5.5% who used Spoken Language with Cues.** A 2018 survey published by The National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management indicated a reduction in the use of ASL nationally: only 6% of children who are deaf or hard of hearing age 0 to 6 years used ASL as the primary method of communication. This compares to 66 % of the children that used Listening and Spoken Language and 12% used who Cued Speech. **It is clear that NO ONE group should have control of the advisory**

March 4, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee
c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov
Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Grand Rapids, Michigan and use only listening and spoken language with my students. This bill concerns me as the population I work with are four and five years old who are acquiring language through listening and spoken language. I am in the position of determining if students are linguistically ready to attend kindergarten in their resident district or continue in a specialized program for the deaf and hard of hearing. It is in this capacity that **I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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March 3, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am teacher of deaf/hard of hearing students. I have worked in this role for over 20 years and supporting students who are deaf/hard of hearing is my passion. It is in this capacity that **I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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In the run up to the drafting of this bill, the idea of giving a majority of the seats on the advisory committee to ASL advocates was expressly opposed by each of the representatives of the professional

March 3, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a Teacher Consultant for Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing and I have worked as an educator of students who are deaf and hard of hearing for over 20 years. It is in this capacity that I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur. Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan. This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

For HB 5777 to serve all children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families, equal and adequate representation of the different approaches to language learning should be reflected in the choice of advisory committee members. As written, this bill gives ASL advocates a majority on the advisory committee. Only a small percentage of Deaf and Hard of Hearing children use ASL as their primary method of communication: a 2010 study by Gallaudet University showed that, at that time in Michigan, 13% of students used sign language including ASL compared to 79.4 % who used Spoken Language and 5.5% who used Spoken Language with Cues. A 2018 survey published by The National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management indicated a reduction in the use of ASL nationally: only 6% of children who are deaf or hard of hearing age 0 to 6 years used ASL as the primary method of communication. This compares to 66 % of the children that used Listening and Spoken Language and 12% used who Cued Speech. It is clear that NO ONE group

March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am an adult with hearing loss and an audiologist (with specialties in cochlear implants, educational audiology, and pediatric audiology). It is in this capacity that **I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language (American Sign Language) primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

For HB 5777 to serve all children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families, equal and adequate representation of the different approaches to language learning should be reflected in the choice of advisory committee members. **As written, this bill gives ASL advocates a majority on the advisory committee.** Only a small percentage of Deaf and Hard of Hearing children use ASL as their primary method of communication: a 2010 study by Gallaudet University showed that, at that time in Michigan, **13% of students used sign language including ASL compared to 79.4 % who used Spoken Language and 5.5% who used Spoken Language with Cues.** A 2018 survey published by The National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management indicated a reduction in the use of ASL nationally: only 6% of children who are deaf or hard of hearing age 0 to 6 years used ASL as the primary method of communication. This compares to 66 % of the children that used Listening and Spoken Language and 12% used who Cued Speech. **It is clear that NO ONE group should have control of the advisory committee, certainly not a group representing only between 6 and 13% of the children affected by the bill. To me, this would be akin to having someone whose expertise in teaching Spanish language make**

March __, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a parent of an adult child who was born with profound, bilateral hearing loss. It is in this capacity that I am requesting that you vote **NO** on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a Michigan resident, community advocate, parent, and communications professional. It is in this capacity that I am requesting that you vote **NO** on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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In the run up to the drafting of this bill, the idea of giving a majority of the seats on the advisory committee to ASL advocates was expressly opposed by each of the representatives of the professional

March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a teacher for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing and a Listening and Spoken Language Specialist through AG Bell. I currently teach in the Trenton Oral Program for Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The goal of my classroom is guide and coach families in spoken language development for their child. The families choose this option for their child and it my role as the teacher, to assist in the development of spoken language. It is in this capacity that **I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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Joy Brewer

From: Amanda Hopkins <amandahopkins.slp@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 12:44 PM
To: Joy Brewer
Subject: Letter Re. HB 5777

March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee
c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov
Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a speech-language pathologist and certified listening and spoken language specialist. I have worked closely with children with hearing loss and their families for many years. In my role as a specialist in hearing loss, I have worked with children who use listening and spoken language and manual modes of communication. It is in this capacity that **I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee
c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov
Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a professional who works with children with hearing loss that use listening and spoken language as their primary mode of communication. It is in this capacity that I am **requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee
c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov
Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a Teacher Consultant for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students and have been for the past 23 years. All of my students use spoken language as their first and only means of communication, and do so by choice. I have a wide range of students from profoundly deaf to mild hearing loss and all of them are functioning within the general education curriculum as independent students. It is in this capacity that I am requesting that you vote **NO** on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a teacher for the deaf/hard of hearing. I work in a classroom teaching spoken language to preschool students with hearing loss. It is in this capacity that **I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee
c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov
Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am the husband of someone who is D/HH and uses spoken language. Unfortunately I, like many people, was unaware that people with profound hearing loss could learn to speak and hear with assistive devices. It depresses me to think that if my child was born or acquired hearing loss that the awareness of spoken language therapy for them would be further marginalized by this bill. It is in this capacity that **I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am Calista Bacalis a Teacher Consultant for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Wayne County. I have serious concerns regarding the passing of this bill. It is in this capacity that I am **requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

For HB 5777 to serve all children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families, equal and adequate representation of the different approaches to language learning should be reflected in the choice of advisory committee members. **As written, this bill gives ASL advocates a majority on the advisory committee.** Only a small percentage of Deaf and Hard of Hearing children use ASL as their primary method of communication: a 2010 study by Gallaudet University showed that, at that time in Michigan, **13% of students used sign language including ASL compared to 79.4 % who used Spoken Language and 5.5% who used Spoken Language with Cues.** A 2018 survey published by The National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management indicated a reduction in the use of ASL nationally: only 6% of children who are deaf or hard of hearing age 0 to 6 years used ASL as the primary method of communication. This compares to 66 % of the children that used Listening and Spoken Language and 12% used who Cued Speech. **It is clear that NO ONE group should have control of the advisory committee, certainly not a group representing only between 6 and 13% of the children affected by the bill.**

Joy Brewer

From: Rebecca Churchill <churchillr@trentonschools.com>
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 1:56 PM
To: Joy Brewer
Subject: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee,

I am a Teacher Consultant for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing working in Michigan schools for more than 20 years. My students and I use spoken language successfully to communicate. It is in this capacity that **I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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In the run up to the drafting of this bill, the idea of giving a majority of the seats on the advisory committee to ASL advocates was expressly opposed by each of the representatives of the

March 6, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee
c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear Members of the House Committee:

I am an Educational Audiologist currently working in Michigan. I provide services to students who are deaf and hard of hearing. It is in this capacity that I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.

I support providing complete information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur. Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan. This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee
c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov
Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am Dr. Samantha Kesteloot, an educational audiologist with Trenton's Oral Program for the Deaf/ Hard of Hearing. I also am an individual with lifelong bilateral normal sloping to profound sensorineural hearing loss. I wore hearing aids as a child and wear a cochlear implant and hearing aid as an adult. I used listening and spoken language for full access of mainstreamed education, college and graduate school. It is in both of these capacities that **I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am an Early Interventionist providing services to children who are deaf and hard of hearing and their families in Wayne County. This is my 26th year working with the Trenton Oral Program for Deaf/Hard of Hearing and my 18th year serving as the Parent-Infant Teacher. I am one of the people in our state who evaluate deaf/hard of hearing children under age 5. It is in this capacity that **I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a professional and I work with students who are D/HH with a variety of hearing losses. All of the students I serve use speech and audition to communicate with their families, peers, and community. It is in this capacity that **I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a Teacher Consultant for students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. I work with students who are Deaf or Hard of hearing. I spend countless hours collaborating with students, teachers and parents to make sure that my students have access to spoken language in the classroom. I give them strategies to navigate a speaking world and the tools they need to help them communicate. It is in this capacity that I am requesting that you vote **NO** on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

For HB 5777 to serve all children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families, equal and adequate representation of the different approaches to language learning should be reflected in the choice of advisory committee members. **As written, this bill gives ASL advocates a majority on the advisory committee.** Only a small percentage of Deaf and Hard of Hearing children use ASL as their primary method of communication: a 2010 study by Gallaudet University showed that, at that time in Michigan, **13% of students used sign language including ASL compared to 79.4 % who used Spoken Language and 5.5% who used Spoken Language with Cues.** A 2018 survey published by The National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management indicated a reduction in the use of ASL nationally: only 6% of children who are deaf or hard of hearing age 0 to 6 years used ASL as the primary method of communication. This compares to 66 % of the children that used Listening and Spoken Language and 12% used who Cued Speech. **It is clear that NO ONE group should have control of the advisory committee, certainly not a group representing only between 6 and 13% of the children affected by the bill.**

Please email as an attachment before Monday 3/7 at 4 p.m. so that the members of the MI House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee will receive it from the Clerk Joy before the Tuesday 3/8 at 12 p.m. hearing in Lansing. For your reference the LEAD-K bill (HB 5777) is attached.

March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a professional who works with individuals who are D/HH and use spoken language and I am concerned about how this bill will impact my students. It is in this capacity that **I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am the daughter of an individual who is deaf and uses spoken language. It is in this capacity that **I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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In the run up to the drafting of this bill, the idea of giving a majority of the seats on the advisory committee to ASL advocates was expressly opposed by each of the representatives of the professional

March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am Samantha Bialczyk, a certified teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. I work in a center based program in Trenton Public School which services families that have chosen to use listening and spoken language as their mode of communication. **It is in this capacity that I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee
c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov
Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am an educational audiologist. . It is in this capacity that **I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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March 7th, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am an educational audiologist at the Berrien County Hearing Impaired Program and I work with Deaf and Hard of Hearing students in Berrien and Cass County's. It is in this capacity that I am requesting that you vote **NO** on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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In the run up to the drafting of this bill, the idea of giving a majority of the seats on the advisory committee to ASL advocates was expressly opposed by each of the representatives of the professional

March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I have been a pediatric educational audiologist for 25 years at the Berrien County Hearing Impaired Program. I work with deaf and hard of hearing students from birth through graduation. It is in this capacity that I am requesting that you vote **NO** on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

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March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am an Audiologist who works with children in the school systems as their Educational Audiologist. It is in this capacity that **I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

For HB 5777 to serve all children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families, equal and adequate representation of the different approaches to language learning should be reflected in the choice of advisory committee members. **As written, this bill gives ASL advocates a majority on the advisory committee.** Only a small percentage of Deaf and Hard of Hearing children use ASL as their primary method of communication: a 2010 study by Gallaudet University showed that, at that time in Michigan, **13% of students used sign language including ASL compared to 79.4 % who used Spoken Language and 5.5% who used Spoken Language with Cues.** A 2018 survey published by The National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management indicated a reduction in the use of ASL nationally: only 6% of children who are deaf or hard of hearing age 0 to 6 years used ASL as the primary method of communication. This compares to 66 % of the children that used Listening and Spoken Language and 12% used who Cued Speech. **It is clear that NO ONE group should have control of the advisory committee, certainly not a group representing only between 6 and 13% of the children affected by the bill.**

In the run up to the drafting of this bill, the idea of giving a majority of the seats on the advisory committee to ASL advocates was expressly opposed by each of the representatives of the professional

Joy Brewer

From: Augusta Cullen <beltows3@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 3:28 PM
To: Joy Brewer
Subject: Letter Re. HB 5777

March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a Teacher Consultant that works daily with students that are deaf and hard of hearing in the public school setting. It is in this capacity that I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur. Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan. This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

For HB 5777 to serve all children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families, equal and adequate representation of the different approaches to language learning should be reflected in the choice of advisory committee members. As written, this bill gives ASL advocates a majority on the advisory committee. Only a small percentage of Deaf and Hard of Hearing children use ASL as their primary method of communication: a 2010 study by Gallaudet University showed that, at that time in Michigan, 13% of students used sign language including ASL compared to 79.4 % who used Spoken Language and 5.5% who used Spoken Language with Cues. A 2018 survey published by The National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management indicated a reduction in the use of ASL nationally: only 6% of children who are deaf or hard of hearing age 0 to 6 years used ASL as the primary method of communication. This compares to 66 % of the children that used Listening and Spoken Language and 12% used who Cued Speech. It is clear that NO ONE group should have control of the advisory committee, certainly not a group representing only between 6 and 13% of the children affected by the bill.

In the run up to the drafting of this bill, the idea of giving a majority of the seats on the advisory committee to ASL advocates was expressly opposed by each of the representatives of the professional organizations in the field of language development and early education of children who are deaf and hard of hearing that attended the April 9, 2019 Stakeholders meeting: Michigan Audiology Association, Michigan Professionals for Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Michigan CEC division of Communication Disorders and Deafness, and the University of Michigan Sound Support. The National Cued Speech Association, the Michigan Hearing Loss Association and the Michigan Alexander



March 1, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee
124 North Capitol Avenue
Lansing, MI 48933

Oppose HB 5777

Dear Chairmen Wakeman and Members of the House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the membership of American Cochlear Implant Alliance—a non-profit organization of parents of children with hearing loss, adults with hearing loss, cochlear implant clinicians, and educators of children who are deaf and hard of hearing. I ask that you oppose HB 5777. This legislation is yet another attempt to enact problematic language that every national hearing health organization opposes. The effort is a waste of state resources. I believe a better focus is on improving the services that already exist.

Children with hearing loss today are identified at birth and should be offered a range of language development options with full parent choice. Federal law, including the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Act and IDEA, requires that all options be offered equally. Our role is to support all communication modalities, not push one option that is preferred by a small minority above all others as language should not be legislated.

HB 5777 proposes to establish a new committee under a government department that could supersede the established and effective Michigan Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) program. This bill will result in inefficient use of public funds as implementation will require an allocation of state monies for a program that will compete with existing IDEA law, which are jointly funded by federal and state governments.

Michigan is a state with superlative programs for families that choose LSL and 21st hearing technology, such as *Sound Support* provided by the University of Michigan. This multidisciplinary approach not only focuses on the family and the child, but also on professional development. Legislation should not put in place mechanisms that may second guess these professionals and programs working with families over the long term.

HB 5777 continues to be problematic because of language that would:

- The advisory committee proposed membership would likely inject bias for one communication approach--American Sign Language (ASL)--as half of the proposed members are trained in or use ASL. Current data shows that 66% of families choose listening and spoken language and only 6% use mostly sign language. Any committee should reflect the perspectives of the population being served.
- Disrupt parent choice on communication modality for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. The vast majority of families are choosing the option for their children to hear and speak over visual communication. This option is supported by published scientific research.

March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a professional and I am advocating on behalf of children and families who utilize Listening and Spoken Language. It is in this capacity that I am **requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

For HB 5777 to serve all children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families, equal and adequate representation of the different approaches to language learning should be reflected in the choice of advisory committee members. **As written, this bill gives ASL advocates a majority on the advisory committee.** Only a small percentage of Deaf and Hard of Hearing children use ASL as their primary method of communication: a 2010 study by Gallaudet University showed that, at that time in Michigan, **13% of students used sign language including ASL compared to 79.4 % who used Spoken Language and 5.5% who used Spoken Language with Cues.** A 2018 survey published by The National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management indicated a reduction in the use of ASL nationally: only 6% of children who are deaf or hard of hearing age 0 to 6 years used ASL as the primary method of communication. This compares to 66 % of the children that used Listening and Spoken Language and 12% used who Cued Speech. **It is clear that NO ONE group should have control of the advisory committee, certainly not a group representing only between 6 and 13% of the children affected by the bill.**

March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear Members of the House Committee:

I have been working in education specifically in the area of Deaf and Hard of Hearing for 24 years. I've been a classroom teacher of preschool and early elementary students with hearing loss, was as a teacher consultant for school age students with hearing loss up to age 26, and currently I provide Early On special education services as a parent-Infant teacher in a program servicing deaf and hard of hearing babies and toddlers and their families. Throughout my tenure, I've seen how early intervention and parent education and support can affect the outcomes for children with hearing loss in very positive ways. I also know this on a more personal level. My child was born with profound hearing loss in both ears 15 years ago. Because of my background and knowledge about children with hearing loss, I was able to make an informed decision about early amplification (hearing aids, cochlear implant), Early On services, and school age services provided by professionals knowledgeable about hearing loss so that my child could learn how to use listening and spoken language. I believe that every family should have access to the same information and opportunities that I had as a parent. Unfortunately, just as in our current political climate, people are not always provided with the same set of facts and information. Please read the following information on why the current House Bill 5777 will not provide families of children with unbiased information simply due to the fact that the advisory board will have a majority of advocates that support that ALL children born with hearing loss should learn ASL.

It is in this capacity that I am requesting that you vote NO on

Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.

12% used who Cued Speech. It is clear that NO ONE group should have control of the advisory committee, certainly not a group representing only between 6 and 13% of the children affected by the bill.

In the run up to the drafting of this bill, the idea of giving a majority of the seats on the advisory committee to ASL advocates was expressly opposed by each of the representatives of the professional organizations in the field of language development and early education of children who are deaf and hard of hearing that attended the April 9, 2019 Stakeholders meeting: Michigan Audiology Association, Michigan Professionals for Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Michigan CEC division of Communication Disorders and Deafness, and the University of Michigan Sound Support. The National Cued Speech Association, the Michigan Hearing Loss Association and the Michigan Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MI AG Bell) all joined in this consensus. Only the LEAD-K representatives supported giving ASL advocates the majority on the advisory committee. For the reasons cited above, I am opposed to HB 5777 and request that you vote against it.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Teresa Sundberg". The signature is written in black ink and includes a long, sweeping horizontal line at the end.

Teresa Sundberg

30250 Oldstream St. Southfield, Mi. 48076

248-928-3070

Joy Brewer

From: Nichole Westin <nwestin@acialliance.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 3, 2022 11:16 AM
To: Joy Brewer
Cc: Stach, Casey
Subject: Opposition to HB 5777
Attachments: Oppose MI 5777 - ACIA.docx

Good morning,

(Donna Sorokin-Eye Director's letter)

Please find attached a letter from the American Cochlear Implant Alliance opposing HB 5777. We are happy to answer any questions the Committee might have.

Regards,

Nichole Westin
Government Policy Manager
ACI Alliance

Joy Brewer

From: Griffin, Brandi <griffinb@med.umich.edu>
Sent: Thursday, March 3, 2022 2:15 PM
To: Joy Brewer
Subject: HB 5777

Ms Brewer,

I am writing to voice my opposition to HB 5777.

Current data shows that 66% of families choose listening and spoken language and only 6% use sign language. HB5777 injects bias, as the advisory committee proposed is biased to favor American Sign Language (ASL). HB777 will result in inefficient use of public funds. Implementation will require an allocation of state monies for a program that will compete with existing IDEA laws, which are jointly funded by federal and state governments. HB777 will conflict with key provisions of Federal IDEA law by focusing on a single point in time during an "assessment" and not focusing on a multidisciplinary approach based on the unique needs of the child.

I would recommend strengthening existing programs that currently track language milestones for birth to three like *Early On*.

Thank you for your time .

Brandi Griffin
Brandi Griffin, AuD
Clinical Audiologist
Cochlear Implant Team, Hearing Rehabilitation Center
475 Market Place, Bldg 1, Ste A
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
(734) 998-8119
(734) 998-8122 FAX



Our foundation & our strength is in our core values



Electronic Mail is not secure, may not be read every day, and should not be used for urgent or sensitive issues



March 8, 2022

Families, Children and Seniors Committee
Michigan House of Representatives
PO BOX 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

President

Tamer Ghanem M.D., PhD
2799 W. Grand Blvd K-8
Detroit, MI 48202
(313)916-3275
tghanem1@hfhs.org

Oppose HB 5777

Dear Families, Children, and Seniors Committee:

On behalf of the Michigan Otolaryngologic Society, representing otolaryngologists throughout the state of Michigan, I am writing to ask you to oppose HB 5777. We as otolaryngologists have researched to bill and believe that it would deprive children with hearing loss the ability to receive the appropriate intervention and care that they deserve.

President-Elect

Robert Hong, M.D., PhD
30055 Northwestern Hwy. #101
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 865-4444
rhong@michiganear.com

The Michigan Otolaryngological Society stands together with the American Cochlear Implant Alliance and all other major hearing health organizations in the United States in opposition to legislation similar to this bill and is for the improvement of services available for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Secretary-Treasurer

Bianca Siegel, M.D.
Children's Hospital of Michigan
3901 Beaubien Blvd.
3rd Floor, Carls Building
Detroit, MI 48201
313-745-9048
siegel.bianca@gmail.com

Children with hearing loss today are identified at birth and should be offered a range of language development options with full parent choice. Federal law, including the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Act and IDEA, requires that all options be offered equally. Our role is to support all communication modalities, not push one option that is preferred by a small minority above all others.

Over 90% of deaf and hard of hearing children are born to two typically hearing parents who do not know sign language and typically seek a language development model for their child that emphasizes the oral language that they are familiar with. If children are amplified or implanted early and receive appropriate family-centered auditory verbal therapy that emphasizes talking, listening engaging and readying, children with hearing loss develop age appropriate language.

Program Chair

Joseph Seymour, MD
5333 McAuley Dr. #2017
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
(734) 434-3200
josephseymourmd@gmail.com

Over 80% of children identified under newborn hearing screening programs have mild to moderately severe hearing loss (<https://www.infantheating.org/>). Of those 20% born with severe or profound hearing loss, some 55-60% receive cochlear implants (Sorkin 2013, 2016). Children who use cochlear implants may use spoken language only, spoken language and Cued Speech, or spoken language and sign language. There is no one right way to be deaf.

Immediate Past President

Ross Mayerhoff, M.D.
Henry Ford Health System
2799 W. Grand Blvd.
Detroit, MI 48202
(313)982-8172
rmayerh1@hfhs.org

Michigan is a state with superlative programs for families that choose LSL and 21st hearing technology, such as Sound Support provided by the University of Michigan. This multidisciplinary approach not only focuses on the family and the child, but also on professional development. Legislation should not put in place mechanisms that may second guess these professionals and programs working with families over the long term.

HB 5777 may:

- Distract from other early intervention challenges for deaf and hard of hearing children in Michigan.
- Result in inefficient use of public funds. Implementation will require an allocation of state monies for a program that will compete with existing IDEA laws, which are jointly funded by federal and state governments. With budget constraints due to the COVID-19 pandemic, money would be better spent on supporting programs that work vs. starting up new ones that duplicate current work.
- Conflict with key provisions of Federal IDEA law by focusing on a single point in time during an "assessment" and not focusing on a multidisciplinary approach based on the unique needs of the child.
- The advisory committee proposed membership would inject a bias for American Sign Language (ASL) as half of the proposed members are trained in, or use, ASL. Current data shows that 66% of families choose listening and spoken language and only 6% use mostly sign language. If someone is providing ASL-based services, they are not considered by the field to be an expert in listening and spoken language (LSL). Those who are working in ASL are ASL-based.
- Disrupt parent choice on communication modality for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. The vast majority of families are choosing the option for their children to hear and speak over visual communication. This ability of families to succeed with this option is supported by published scientific research.
- Not represent the needs of the multi-cultural community in the State of Michigan for whom spoken English or American Sign Language (ASL) is not their first language.

Council

Seilesh Babu, M.D.
Dennis Bojrab, M.D.
Michael Carron, M.D.
Eleanor Chan, M.D.
Michael Hauptert, D.O.
Lamont Jones, M.D., MBA
Charles Koopmann, M.D.
Arthur Rosner, M.D.
Adam Rubin, M.D.
Bianca Siegel, M.D.
Robert Stachler, M.D.
Robert Standing, MD
Mark A. Zacharek, M.D.

Thank you for your time. I would be pleased to discuss these concerns as well as other ways to improve the early intervention system for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. I can be reached at tghanem1@hfhs.org.

Honorary Council Member

Jeffrey S. Weingarten, M.D.

Regards,

Tamer Ghanem, MD, PhD
MOS President

March 3, 2022

Re: Opposition to HB 5777

Dear Chairman Wakeman and members of the Families Children and Seniors Committee.

I am a speech language pathologist and LSLS Certified Auditory Verbal Therapist, with 25 years of experience specializing in work with children with hearing loss of all levels and backgrounds, most of that time spent here in Michigan. It is in this capacity that I am requesting that you vote **NO** on Michigan HB 5777 due to **the bias against spoken language present in the bill.**

I support providing full information to parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including information about American Sign Language (ASL), Listening and Spoken Language (LSL), Cued Speech, Augmentative and Alternative Communication and other appropriate modes of communication. Additionally, I support requiring valid assessments and providing children with professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **HB 5777, however, FAILS to create an avenue for these to occur.** Specifically, for HB 5777 to achieve its stated goal of developing a resource for use by parents or legal guardians of any child who is deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of the language that they choose to use in their home, **the bill must do a better job of representation of the diversity of the population of deaf or hard of hearing children in the state of Michigan.** This bill, which was submitted by a group that advocates for the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, is biased toward support of that language primarily through its description of the advisory committee to be formed.

As written, HB 5777 gives ASL advocates a majority on the advisory committee that will be tasked with creating this resource. Only a small percentage of Deaf and Hard of Hearing children use ASL as their primary method of communication: a 2010 study by Gallaudet University showed that, at that time in Michigan, 13% of students used sign language including ASL compared to 79.4 % who used Spoken Language and 5.5% who used Spoken Language with Cues. A 2018 survey published by The National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management indicated a reduction in the use of ASL nationally: only 6% of children who are deaf or hard of hearing age 0 to 6 years used ASL as the primary method of communication. This compares to 66 % of the children that used Listening and Spoken Language and 12% used who Cued Speech. **It is clear that NO ONE group should have control of the advisory committee, certainly not a group representing only between 6 and 13% of the children affected by the bill.**

For the reasons cited above, I am OPPOSED to HB 5777 and request that you vote against it.

Respectfully,

Ashley S. Garber (Adox) M.S. CCC-SLP, LSLS Cert. AVT
3639 River Pines Dr.
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
734-417-1347

*No letter
Attached*

Joy Brewer

From: Heather Braspenninx <HeatherBraspenninx@kentisd.org>
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 12:18 PM
To: Joy Brewer
Subject: Letter Re. HB 5777
Attachments: Letter to Oppose HB5777.docx

Please read my attached letter including concerns for HB 5777
Thank you for your consideration!

Heather Braspenninx

**Teacher Consultant for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Kent ISD Oral Deaf Program
heatherbraspenninx@kentisd.org
cell: 734-904-1665**



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March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee

c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a Supervisor of an Oral Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program and I have HUGE concerns with HB 5777 as it is now written. I am requesting that you vote NO on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.

I have dedicated my career to making sure all parents of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing understand all of the communication options available to their child. I have supported the use of proper assessment and counselling to families on their child's progress with spoken language. I am a strong proponent of children with hearing loss having access to professionals who are trained in the language and supporting mode of communication chosen by the parents, subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). HB 5777 is biased toward the use of ASL for ALL deaf children, which is a huge disservice to the families of our deaf and hard of hearing children who choose spoken language.

For HB 5777 to serve all children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families, equal and adequate representation of the different approaches to language learning should be reflected in the choice of advisory committee members. **As written, this bill gives ASL advocates a majority on the advisory committee.**

You have done your research so you should know that the majority of children with hearing loss use spoken language as their primary means of communication. Why would you dismiss the voices of these parents by giving the majority of seats on the advisory committee to people who do not have the best interests of these oral children with hearing loss in the forefront.

For the reasons cited above, I am opposed to HB 5777 and request that you vote against it.

Respectfully,

Julie Gerrity, Ed.S

Supervisor

Trenton Oral Program for Deaf and Hard of Hearing

2601 Charlton

Trenton, MI 48183

SPECIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT / Andrea Thorn, Director
DEAF & HARD OF HEARING DEPARTMENT / Julie Gerrity, Supervisor

Joy Brewer

From: Ezra Keshet <ezrakeshet@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 4:31 PM
To: Joy Brewer; Rep. Rodney Wakeman (District 94); Rep. Luke Meerman (District 88); Rep. Laurie Pohutsky (District 19); Rep. John R. Roth (District 104); Rep. Daire Rendon (District 103); Rep. Mark Tisdell (District 45); Rep. Darrin Camilleri (District 23); Rep. Brenda Carter (District 29); Rep. Abraham Aiyash (District 4)
Subject: Supporting HB5777

Dear Representatives,

I am writing to convey my strong support for House Bill 5777. As a linguistics professor, I am keenly aware of the equality of all languages, signed and spoken. As a Michigan resident and parent, I believe in the equal access to education for all children, in a language that they can access.

Best regards,

Ezra Keshet
<http://www.ezrakeshet.com>

Joy Brewer

From: Kate Woodburne <KateWoodburne@kentisd.org>
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 3:56 PM
To: Joy Brewer
Subject: HB 5777

March 7, 2022

House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee c/o joybrewer@house.mi.gov

Re: HB 5777

Dear members of the House Committee:

I am a licensed audiologist in Kent Intermediate School District. I've been an educational audiologist for 20+ years in programs using both spoken language only and total communication. It is in this capacity that I am requesting that you **FIX the TYPOS** on Michigan HB 5777 due to the bias against spoken language present in the bill.

It repeatedly reads the phrase "and a mode of communication" which is misleading and confusing. It should read "as a mode of communication".

I'm disappointed this has been so poorly written!

As for the bill, just alter the head count of the committee members recommended to be exactly equal and then you have something good!

Kate Woodburne, Au.D.

Audiologist
Kent Intermediate School District
Grand Rapids MI 49525
KateWoodburne@KentISD.org
Mobile: (616) 648-7510
Office at Northview: (616) 361-3470
For Roger/FM system Technical support:
AUDIO@KENTISD.ORG



Joy Brewer

From: Starr, Kelly <kellnich@med.umich.edu>
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 9:43 PM
To: Joy Brewer
Subject: HB 5777

To whom it may concern,

I am Kelly Starr, a speech language pathologist, at Michigan Medicine's Hearing Rehabilitation Center. I have been solely working with the Deaf/Hard of Hearing population for the past 15 years, specifically children and their families. In my work I assess language and provide therapy. As part of my assessments and therapy we talk with the family about their goals for their child and communication options. Often different options need to be utilized for reasons outside of parent choice including additional diagnoses that may impact development such as vision impairment. A variety of options are needed for children who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing.

Families want to speak their home language with their child. Over 90% of children who are deaf/hard of hearing are born to hearing parents and to be part of that community parents often select spoken language for communication with their child. The proposed board would not accurately represent the need for spoken language and listening.

I oppose HB5777.

Kelly

Kelly Nichols Starr, MA, CCC-SLP
Senior Speech-Language Pathologist
LSLS Certified Auditory-Verbal Therapist

Hearing Rehabilitation Center
475 Market Place
Bldg. 1, Suite A
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
Phone: (734) 998-8119
Fax: (734) 998-8122
TTY/TDD: (734) 998-8121
kellnich@med.umich.edu

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