

**Museum of Deaf History, Arts & Culture, Inc.  
Presents a Sample  
Deaf Proclamation Template**

TO THE PEOPLE OF [State]:

Greetings,

WHEREAS, approximately 1.5 billion individuals worldwide<sup>1</sup>, which includes 37 million United States citizens<sup>2</sup>, belong within the realm of a diverse Deaf Community that encompasses wide-ranging variations in how they identify, what age and how they became deaf or deaf-blind, level of hearing, educational background, communication method or modality, cultural affiliations, and who, consciously or unconsciously, processes naturally enhanced visual, spatial, and tactile skills; and

WHEREAS, over half of a million United States citizens<sup>3</sup>, proudly embrace a distinctive identity, not through the lens of “loss or impairment” but as individuals with an alternative sensory and social experience, harnessing the power of visual languages that can surpass the confines of spoken languages and honoring their historical, cultural, and linguistic realities; and

WHEREAS, approximately 1 million of the United State population<sup>4</sup> including both Deaf Community members and non-deaf residents proudly communicate using signed language, including American Sign Language (ASL), Black American Sign Language (BASL), and/or Mexican Sign language (LSM), thereby contributing to the state of [State]’ linguistic diversity and broadening the spectrum of inclusivity in all citizen’s interaction; and

WHEREAS, in [State], approximately XXX Community members span various communication modalities and self-identifications, ranging from those deeply involved in Deaf Community affairs to those who are not as involved and/or became deaf later in life; and

WHEREAS, in [State], approximately XXX babies annually embark on their journey in life, emphasizing the expansive narrative of self-perception, and thereby reinforcing [State]’ resolve to foster and maintain a societal fabric steeped in a language-rich environment (acknowledging signed language and tactile experiences as inherent birthrights), bio-cultural diversity, and inclusivity; and

WHEREAS, in [State], around XXX sign language interpreters and other communication access professionals play an integral role in advancing the state’s linguistic landscape, ensuring equitable communication access among all individuals;

WHEREAS, the *[State] Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing* actively develops and supports wide-ranging intersections within the Deaf Community, providing information,

advocacy, public education, and direct services, as well as promoting inclusive communication practices and professions; and

WHEREAS, the *[State] Association of the Deaf*, established in XXXX, acts as a steadfast guardian by promoting, preserving, and protecting the civil, human, and linguistic rights of Deaf Community members; and

WHEREAS, the *[State] School for the Deaf*, established in XXXX, acts as a vital hub for educational and community involvement, offers a rich bilingual and bicultural education in American Sign Language and English, fostering academic excellence and personal growth, while contributing to the socio-biological diversity, vitality and shared humanity of [State]; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I **[Governor's Name]**, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF [STATE], do hereby proclaim [Date]5, as

### **A Day of Celebration for Deaf Culture & Signed Language**

in [State], calling upon all [State citizens] to unite and celebrate the diverse human biology of our state, and extend gratitude for the invaluable contributions made by members of the Deaf Community in enriching our shared humanity and promoting a thriving, biodiverse ecosystem.

#### End Notes:

- 1) 1.5 billion all across spectrum worldwide comes from *World Health Organization* and they determined 20% of world population: [https://www.who.int/health-topics/hearing-loss#tab=tab\\_2](https://www.who.int/health-topics/hearing-loss#tab=tab_2)
- 2) 37 million across the spectrum in USA comes from *National Institute of Health* <https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/statistics/quick-statistics-hearing>
- 3) Half of a Million in USA comes from the *Rhode Island Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing* where they named their source as *Mitchell, Ross E., et al. (2006). How Many People Use ASL in the United States? Gallaudet University, Gallaudet Research Institute, Washington, D.C.* <https://cdhh.ri.gov/information-referral/american-sign-language.php>
- 4) 1 million signers including Deaf and nondeaf comes from the *National Institute of Health* and multiplying 2.8 percentage with 37 million. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36423340/#:~:text=Adult%20sign%20language%20use%20was,any%20other%20hearing%20acuity%20group.>
- 5) If you want to use for Deaf History Month, *National Association of the Deaf* suggests to use the month of April. <https://www.nad.org/2022/01/31/national-deaf-history-month-dates/>