

August 27, 2016

Theresa Fuller-Sakolsky, Chair (IDHHC)

The Illinois Association of the Deaf (IAD) provided the community an opportunity to express its concerns with the actions (or lack thereof) of IDHHC. I believe the Commissioners had the opportunity to hear first-hand about services and resources that are needed by the very community IDHHC professes to serve. In addition to the petition, individuals could send a form e-mail or letter to IDHHC. I chose to sign the petition and send an email. I also used the form letter link to write a personalized letter.

I am deeply disturbed by Director Miller's statement that he chose not to consider "form letters"; he chose to contact only persons who sent a "personalized" letter. Businesses and public officials send out and receive form letters on a daily basis. Form letters are not more or less valid than those that are personalized. Director Miller did not contact me in any format whatsoever presumably because I used the form letter link. This action is a disservice to the needs and concerns of those who sent form letters.

At the 2015 IAD conference, members determined their priorities. One of these was the education of our children who are Deaf and hard-of-hearing. I am the co-chair of this team. It appears that IDHHC had an education task force and a report was submitted to legislators on December 2008. Nothing in that report is surprising; these same issues continue to exist in Illinois. The report can be found at IDHHC's website:

<http://www.illinois.gov/idhhc/community/Documents/IDHHC%20Publications/Ed%20Report%202006.pdf>

The 2008 Joint Task Force Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education Options report delineates nine issues, listing the objective(s) and action item(s) for each. The only tangible evidence of the current administration's work to address the education setting is the administration of the Board of Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI). This is a vehicle used by individuals who wish to get approval to interpret in the K-12 setting. This does nothing to improve educational access for our children aside from improving the odds that a warm body will be providing interpreter services in classrooms where one is needed. The negligence on the part of the current IDHHC administration does our Deaf and hard of hearing children and their parents a great disservice.

Lastly, but not least, it is my sincere hope that my remarks in this letter, as well as other form letters that may have been sent will be considered as the Commissioners take a closer look at the inner workings of the current IDHHC administrators.

Thank you.



Christina Pean

CC: Corey Axelrod, President (IAD)

Joseph Culpepper, Commissioner

Deloris Summers, Vice Chair

Karla Geise, Commissioner

Cindy, Janovetz, Commissioner

Laura Thomas, Commissioner

Dennis O'Brien, Commissioner

Lori Krakora, Commissioner

Haydee Garcia, Commissioner

Susan Dramin-Weiss, Commissioner