

Written Testimony of Donna Schultz

Ohio SB 27 Hearing Given at the Ohio House of Representatives

March 28, 2017

Good Morning Members of the Ohio House of Representatives. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to present my testimony to support Ohio Senate Bill on Ohio Deaf History Month.

My name is Donna Schultz. I lived in Long Island, New York before moving to Ohio. I attended Mill Neck Manor for the Deaf, a Private Oral School. I went to Gallaudet College, Washington, D.C. and graduated from National Technical Institute for the Deaf in Rochester, New York.

I suffer from Optic Nerve Atrophy and this led me to becoming Deaf. I am retired from the Department of Defense where I worked for 33 years. I am involved in Deaf and Deaf-Blind organizations and serve as a Deaf-

Blind Advocate. I am a member of Citizens for Deaf Cultures, Central Region.

As Founder of Ohio Central Deaf Blind Association, its mission is to help Deaf Blind improve their life daily through resources. They can get trainings to learn how to live independently. We work with families of deaf-blind children to help them with resources such as: Deaf Blind schools, specialized doctors, Deaf Blind equipments for communication abilities like Braille, Zoomtext software for PC computer, CCTV device for Low Vision and more, public safety and Deaf Blind communities. Families that have babies born deaf-blind should be given resources in hospitals to learn more about our Deaf-Blind Community and state school for the Deaf-Blind. Also, I am newly elected President of Ohio Association of the DeafBlind.

In the past, Ohio Deaf Blind Outreach Program (ODBOP) provided excellent services and programs offered to every Deaf Blind individual statewide. It is affiliated with Helen Keller National Center, both vocational and non-vocational. ODBOP services include Communication and Technology, Vocational Training, Life Management skills, Consulting & Education, Now this program is no longer in existence due to State budget cuts. Where would Deaf-Blind individuals get help to meet their needs such as: help with job search and transportation?

Ohio Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled have over thousands of Audio Books and about over 100 Braille books that DeafBlind Citizens can't able to listen Audio Books.

Thank you for allowing my testimony to be heard in support of Ohio Senate Bill 27 on Ohio Deaf History Month which runs from March 13 to April 15. If passed, we would like to see Ohio Public Libraries showcase Deaf Culture resource books during this history month. Therefore, I urge the committee to support Ohio Senate Bill 27. Thank you.