

# State of North Carolina

**ROY COOPER**  
GOVERNOR

DEAF AWARENESS MONTH

2020

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

**WHEREAS**, the population of adults with hearing loss in North Carolina is projected to increase by 33 percent, from 1.2 million in 2015 to 1.65 million in 2030; and

**WHEREAS**, all of North Carolina's birthing and neonatal facilities offer initial new born hearing screening services prior to discharge; more than 99 percent of infants are screened for the presence of permanent hearing loss, and more than 200 infants are diagnosed each year, with about the same number acquiring hearing loss by the time they enter school; and

**WHEREAS**, the Deaf population of North Carolina includes individuals born profoundly deaf who use American Sign Language (ASL) as a primary means of communication, as well as those with a range of hearing loss who use hearing aids, assistive listening devices, or other forms of amplifications and communication modes; and

**WHEREAS**, American Sign Language (ASL) is a valid linguistic means of conveying thoughts, ideas, and emotions; it is a fully operating functional language with its own syntax, morphology, and structure; and

**WHEREAS**, people who identify themselves as Deaf belong to a cultural and linguistic community, with shared language, social norms, rules of behavior, and history; and

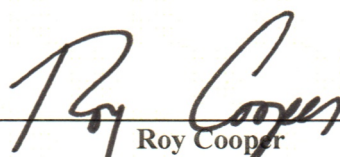
**WHEREAS**, to commemorate the first congress of the World Federation of the Deaf, which was held in September of 1951, North Carolina will join in recognizing September as Deaf Awareness Month; and

**WHEREAS**, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, through the Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DSDHH) and their Regional Centers, provides services, including advocacy for communication access, consultation, Deaf culture and ASL awareness, information, and referral to people who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or Deaf-Blind, and their communities in this state; and

**WHEREAS**, DSDHH joins the North Carolina Association of the Deaf (NCAD), North Carolina Black Deaf Advocates (NCBDA), Deaf Seniors of North Carolina and Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) in encouraging awareness, understanding, and recognition of the many contributions made by Deaf people in communities across our state;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, ROY COOPER, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim September, 2020, as "DEAF AWARENESS MONTH" in North Carolina, and commend its observance to all citizens.



  
Roy Cooper  
Governor

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this eighteenth day of August in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-fifth.