

Senators Gleason, Cropsey, Thomas, Cherry, Olshove, Scott, Prusi, Clarke, Jacobs, Hunter, Basham, Switalski, Anderson, Schauer, Brater, Garcia, Clark-Coleman, Bishop, Kahn, Allen, Kuipers, Van Woerkom, Sanborn, Stamas, McManus, Richardville, Patterson, Pappageorge, Jansen, Barcia, Birkholz, Brown, Hardiman, George, Whitmer, Gilbert and Jelinek offered the following concurrent resolution:

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 6.

A concurrent resolution to express the sense of the Michigan Legislature that all future State of the State addresses be interpreted for the deaf and hard of hearing by qualified interpreters.

Whereas, More than 31 million Americans have hearing loss. As baby boomers reach retirement age, starting in 2010, this number is expected to nearly double by the year 2030; and

Whereas, It is estimated that 1.4 million people in the state of Michigan have some degree of hearing loss; and

Whereas, Hearing loss can greatly hinder everyday, ordinary communication, and people with hearing loss often feel a sense of isolation when deprived of access to effective communication; and

Whereas, The state of Michigan serves as a model of inclusion for all deaf and hard of hearing individuals; and

Whereas, The state of Michigan should provide accommodations, such as sign language interpreters, assistive listening technology, and televised captioning for all deaf and hard of hearing individuals at State of the State addresses; and

Whereas, For the first time in history, the 2007 Governor's State of the State address was interpreted by qualified interpreters provided by the Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing within the Department of Labor and Economic Growth. This presentation clearly illustrated the appropriateness of making this a permanent part of such events; and

Whereas, The state of Michigan recognizes the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing and appreciates the accommodations made by Governor Granholm and House Speaker Dillon to provide state of Michigan "qualified interpreters" at the State of the State address; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of the members of the Michigan Legislature that all future State of the State addresses be interpreted for the deaf and hard of hearing by qualified interpreters provided by the Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing within the Department of Labor and Economic Growth; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Office of the Governor and the Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing within the Department of Labor and Economic Growth.