

## **ODHH Legislative Action Alerts: Exciting News!**

*From the Desk of*  
Julie Anne Schafer, Esq.  
Assistant Director  
Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

I have some exciting news to report!

Today, the Senate voted unanimously (46-0) to pass SB 79, which adds a deafblind representative to the ODHH Advisory Council. Next, the bill will go to the House of Delegates for discussion and a vote. Contact your Delegates to let them know deafblind representatives should be on the ODHH Council!

Yesterday, SB 68 had a hearing in the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee. This bill requires that TVs located in public place have closed captioning activated at all times when it is open and the TV is on. This means if you were in a hospital/doctor's waiting room, a restaurant, a car repair shop, or a gym, if they have the TV on, the captions will have to be on and you wouldn't have to fight with the staff to get them to turn them on. This bill needs your support! Please contact your Senators and spread the word. Lets work together to get this landmark legislation passed in Maryland!

Also, SB 102, which would require people running in an election to caption their ads on TV and post transcripts of their radio ads, was introduced this week by Senator Stone. There is a hearing scheduled for February 4<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM. Contact your Senators and tell them equal access should be a priority for Maryland.

Finally, if you haven't done so already, please sign up for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Legislative Awareness Day on February 15<sup>th</sup>. This will be an important and exciting event for people with hearing loss in Maryland. You can RSVP at <http://www.odhh.maryland.gov/updates.html>.

As always, I am happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for your support and for working with us to ensure access for all Marylanders.

Julie

Julie Anne Schafer, Esq.  
Assistant Director  
Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
217 E. Redwood Street, Suite 1300  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
410-767-7793 (voice)