



March 29, 2012

Mr. Andrew Scheer
Speaker of the House of Commons
Chair, Board of Internal Economy
224-N Centre Block
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Speaker Scheer,

On the behalf of The Canadian Association of the Deaf, the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, The Canadian Hearing Society and the hundreds of thousands of culturally Deaf, oral deaf, deafened and hard of hearing Canadians that we serve and represent, we wish to draw to your attention to the fact that the televised proceedings of the House of Commons are not currently captioned in both English and French beyond the daily Oral Question Period.

As the Federal Government's televised statements and debates in the House should be accessible to all viewers, we respectfully request that the Board of Internal Economy considers and directs the House Administration to implement full captioning and signed language interpretation of the televised House of Commons proceedings, including members' statements, Oral Question Period and debates, in both official languages.

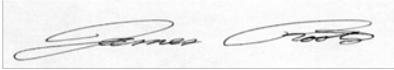
We request this in light of the Government of Canada and all political parties in the House of Commons having ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in March 2010, and the *Accessibility for All Report, June 2005*, which recommended that "closed captioning and sign language of House of Commons proceedings and committees' broadcast be provided in both official languages."

Ontario's parliamentary channel at Queen's Park provides captioning of its televised proceedings of the Provincial Legislature in Ontario including members' statements, Oral Question Period, and debates in the House. As well, the Congress of the United States currently captions its televised proceedings of the Congress statements and debates.

Government proceedings are relevant to all citizens including Deaf and hard of hearing Canadians; and those proceedings that are televised must be accessible to all viewers.

We look forward to receiving your response at your earliest opportunity, and look forward to a positive, accessible outcome – captioning and signed language interpreting of televised proceedings of the House of Commons – in the very near future.

Sincerely,



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cc: Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General, United Nations
Mr. Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada, Leader of Conservative Party of Canada
Mr. Thomas Mulcair, Leader of the Official Opposition, Leader of Canada's NDP
Mr. Bob Rae, Interim Leader of Liberal Party of Canada
Ms. Elizabeth May, Leader of Green Party of Canada
Laurie Beachell, National Coordinator, Council of Canadians with Disabilities
Ivana Petricone, Executive Director, ARCH Disability Law Centre
Jennifer Lynch, Chief Commissioner, Canadian Human Rights Commission
Graham Fraser, Commissioner, Official Languages
Leonard Katz, Acting Chairman, Vice-Chairman, CRTC Telecommunications
Tom Pentefountas, Vice-Chairman, CRTC, Broadcasting