

Center for Disability Rights, Inc.

25 July 2022

Diana Pryntz, Executive Director
Deaf Refugee Advocacy Inc
POB 10335
Rochester, NY 14610

Dear Ms. Pryntz:

Center for Disability Rights, Inc. DBA Sign Language Connection (SLC) is pleased to provide this letter of support in support of Deaf Refugee Advocacy (DRA)'s response to the Monroe County American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding Opportunities RFP. Since its formation, DRA has offered essential on-going community support for extremely at-risk citizens within the Monroe County area: deaf refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seekers (RIAs).

DRA's project, if funded through the ARPA Funding Opportunity, will have a significant impact on reducing barriers faced by deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing RIAs that were made evident and exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. These systemic barriers, which include but are not limited to language, cultural, and accessibility, can be overcome through DRA's efforts to provide programming on language and cultural competency, health, safety, and employment to individuals and their families. As a result of these sign language-centric services, deaf RIAs' skills, support networks, and sense of belonging will increase, engaging them as equitable and contributing members of the Monroe County community.

Full funding of DRA's ARPA submission will significantly meet the needs of a population that has been historically underserved, due to their unique intersectionality of people who are deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seekers. SLC believes in the importance of DRA's work and the ultimate impact it aims to achieve. By addressing these inequities, DRA's transformational approach will ultimately benefit deaf RIAs, their families, and the community members, employers, and service providers they engage with, strengthening Monroe County for all.

SLC is a well-known interpreting agency in Rochester, and we provide interpreting services and access to Deaf individuals throughout Monroe County and its surrounding counties. We have worked with individuals through DRA in the past and will happily continue to do so as both organizations focus on language and cultural competency and accessibility.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Brooke J. Erickson
Director of Deaf Services
497 State Street
Rochester, NY 14608
berickson@cdrnys.org
585-286-2021

Rochester Office 497 State Street Rochester, New York 14608 (585) 546-7510 V/TTY (585) 546-5643 FAX
Albany Office 99 Washington Avenue, Suite 806B Albany, New York 12210 (518) 320-7100 V/TTY (518) 320-7122 FAX
Geneva Office 34 Castle Street Geneva, New York 14456 (315) 789-1800 V/TTY (315) 789-2100 FAX
Corning Office 23 West Market Street, Suite 103 Corning, New York 14830 (607) 654-0030 V/TTY (607) 936-1258 FAX