

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
1977 SESSION

CHAPTER 991
HOUSE BILL 1017

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A STATE COUNCIL FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES TO THE HEARING IMPAIRED.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. Article 3 of Chapter 143B of the General Statutes is hereby amended by adding a new Part to be numbered and designated as follows:

"Part 23.

"North Carolina Council for the Hearing Impaired.

"§ 143B-210. North Carolina Council for the Hearing Impaired; responsibilities of council. — There is hereby created the North Carolina Council for the Hearing Impaired of the Department of Human Resources, which shall have the following duties:

- (1) to advocate services affecting hearing impaired individuals in the areas of public services, health care, and educational opportunity;
- (2) to act as a bureau of information for the hearing impaired to State agencies and public institutions providing health care and educational services to the hearing impaired, to local agencies and programs;
- (3) to serve as an advisory body to the Secretary of the Department of Human Resources on the needs of the hearing impaired by preparing an annual report which reviews the status of all State services to the hearing impaired within North Carolina, and to recommend priorities to the department for the development and coordination of services to this population.

"§ 143B-211. North Carolina Council for the Hearing Impaired; members. — (a) The North Carolina Council for the Hearing Impaired shall consist of 18 members as follows: five representatives of the Department of Human Resources to be designated by the Secretary of Human Resources from the areas of health services, mental health services, social services, the North Carolina Schools for the Deaf, and vocational rehabilitation services; one representative of the Department of Public Instruction, to be designated by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, from the area of exceptional children; the Director of the Employment Security Commission, or his designee; one representative of the Department of Administration to be designated by the Secretary of the Department of Administration from the area of special personnel projects; the President of the North Carolina Association of the Deaf, or his designee; the President of the North Carolina Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, or his designee; the President of the North Carolina Parents Association of the Deaf, or his designee; five additional members who are hearing impaired to be appointed by the Governor from nominations submitted by the North Carolina Association of the Deaf; one member of the North Carolina House of Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one member of the North Carolina Senate to be appointed by the President of the Senate. Legislative members shall be appointed for terms of two years. The five hearing impaired members appointed by the Governor and the three representatives of consumer organizations shall serve on the council for terms of four years, provided that members initially appointed, the Governor shall designate two members of the members initially appointed who shall serve terms of five years, two who

shall serve terms of four years, two who shall serve terms of three years and two who shall serve terms of two years.

(b) The terms of the members first appointed shall commence July 1, 1977. At the expiration of the term of any member of the council, his successor shall be appointed for a term of four years except for the members of the House and the Senate who shall serve terms of two years.

Vacancies occurring other than by expiration of term in the membership of the council shall be filled by the Governor, the Speaker of the House, the Lieutenant Governor or the appropriate appointing authority. No person shall be eligible to serve more than two successive terms other than the representatives of the above named State agencies.

"§ 143B-212. North Carolina Council for the Hearing Impaired, chairman; reimbursement of members. — The chairman of the council shall be designated by the Secretary of Human Resources from the appointed members of the council, and shall hold this office for not more than four years. The council shall meet at the call of the chairperson, but not less than four times a year.

The members of the council shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties in accordance with G.S. 138-5.

"§ 143B-213. North Carolina Council for the Hearing Impaired, State Coordinator; duties. — (a) There shall be established the position of State Coordinator of Services for the Hearing Impaired who shall be the chief executive officer of the council. The State Coordinator shall be responsible to the Secretary of Human Resources.

(b) The coordinator, with the advice of the council, and as directed by the Secretary of Human Resources shall:

- (1) plan and direct the establishment of at least one community service center for the hearing impaired in each of the Department of Human Resources regions in North Carolina, and directly supervise the activities of these centers;
- (2) promote accessibility of all governmental services to hearing impaired citizens in North Carolina including those hearing impaired persons with multiple disabilities;
- (3) identify agencies, both public and private which provide community services, evaluate the extent to which they make services available to hearing impaired people, and cooperate with the agencies in coordinating and extending these services;
- (4) provide for the mutual exchange of ideas and information on services for hearing impaired people between federal, State and local governmental agencies, and private organizations and individuals;
- (5) survey the needs of the hearing impaired population in North Carolina, and assist the North Carolina Council for the Hearing Impaired in the preparation of the annual report to the Secretary of Human Resources;
- (6) maintain a listing of persons qualified in various types of interpreting, and make this information available to local, State, federal and private organizations;
- (7) promote the training of interpreters for the hearing impaired to a level which will enable them to meet national and/or State certification requirements;
- (8) serve as an advocate for the rights of hearing impaired people.

(c) In selecting the State Coordinator of Community Services for the Deaf, the Secretary of Human Resources shall select an individual who is fluent in the American sign language of the deaf and shall give consideration and priority to qualified applicants who are hearing impaired.

(d) The Secretary of the Department of Human Resources is authorized to arrange for clerical or other assistance as may be required by the council.

"§ 143B-214. North Carolina Council for the Hearing Impaired; annual report. — The North Carolina Council for the Hearing Impaired shall make an annual report to the Secretary of Human Resources, as described in G.S. 143B-210.

"§ 143B-215. North Carolina Council for the Hearing Impaired; assistance of other agencies. — The council may request and shall receive from any department, division, board, bureau, commission, or agency of the State or of any political subdivision thereof such assistance and data as might be needed to enable it to properly carry out its activities under this Article.

"§ 143B-216. North Carolina Council for the Hearing Impaired; plan for community services for hearing impaired. — The Secretary of Human Resources shall develop a short-range plan during the 1977-1979 biennium for implementing community services for the hearing impaired based upon recommendations of the State Council for the Hearing Impaired. The secretary shall insure that long-range planning is conducted which shall include a description of the locations and geographic service areas for such centers, the personnel needs, and strategies for coordinating service providers at State and local levels having contact with the deaf and hearing impaired population.

"§ 143B-217. North Carolina Council for the Hearing Impaired; functions of service centers. — The purposes of community service centers for the hearing impaired shall be as follows:

- (1) to inform hearing impaired persons and their families of their rights to services offered locally and to coordinate their referral to the appropriate organization;
- (2) to coordinate communication between hearing impaired persons and the desired agency or organization, and to promote the accessibility of community services to hearing impaired persons;
- (3) to coordinate the provision of interpreting services to hearing impaired persons in community colleges and technical institutes;
- (4) to promote expanded adult educational opportunities for hearing impaired persons in community colleges and technical institutes;
- (5) to coordinate the provision of instruction in sign language to persons in community agencies;
- (6) to inform interested staff of community and professional organizations about the nature of deafness and the capabilities of hearing impaired persons;
- (7) to provide services to families and employers of hearing impaired persons, and to agencies which provide services to the hearing impaired;
- (8) to serve as an advocate for the rights and needs of people with hearing impairments, including hearing impaired persons having multiple disabilities (i.e., deaf-blind);
- (9) to provide services to hearing impaired persons regardless of income, age, or employability;
- (10) to help hearing impaired citizens to become self-sufficient in meeting their needs in the community.

"§ 143B-218. North Carolina Council for the Hearing Impaired; receipt of monies. — (a) The Department of Human Resources may receive monies from any source, including federal funds, gifts, grants, and bequests which shall be expended for the purposes designated in this act.

(b) The Secretary of the Department of Human Resources is hereby authorized to designate an existing division with the Department of Human Resources to provide statewide services to the hearing impaired as specified in this Article."

Sec. 2. There is hereby appropriated to the Department of Human Resources, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, from the General Fund, in addition to all other funds, the sum of sixty-five thousand dollars (\$65,000) for fiscal year 1977-78, and one hundred ninety-five thousand dollars (\$195,000) for fiscal year 1978-79 for the purpose of implementing the provisions of this act.

Sec. 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 1977.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified, this the 1st day of July, 1977.