

Hello DeafBlind Community,

Happy Holidays!

The DBLN Core Team has been hard at work. We now have an opportunity to meet with Congressman Thomas Suozzi, NY-03. Why is this important? His district includes the Helen Keller National Center in Sands Point, NY.

Rep. Suozzi's staff and Marc Safman have been in communication about enlisting his support. However, Rep. Suozzi spoke with HKNC management before meeting with us. His staff reported that he believes HKNC leadership is "doing wonderful" and that their attempt at a leadership program is "great."

Marc clarified that Rep. Suozzi completely missed the core purpose of DBLN—it is NOT about a leadership program. It is ALL about DeafBlind-led HKNC.

DBLN exists because DeafBlind-led goals, priorities, and decision-making must be recognized and implemented by the hearing-sighted management at HKNC and Helen Keller Services.

The good news: Rep. Suozzi is willing to meet directly with the DeafBlind community to hear unfiltered perspectives. This meeting will be held virtually.

Marc is currently working with his office to confirm a date—likely in late January or early February.

To help schedule, please suggest which dates work best for you.

WAYS TO PARTICIPATE:

1. Review DBLN's goals at <https://deafblindleadershipnow.org>
2. Attend the virtual meeting with Rep. Suozzi.
3. Submit your voice in advance:
 - a. Create a short video or written statement explaining why DBLN goals must be implemented by HKNC/HKS management.
 - b. Send your video or written statement to Marc Safman at marc@safmanconsulting.com so he can deliver it or have it posted for Rep. Suozzi on the day of the meeting. (Thank you, Haben, for reminding Marc of this important option!)

Thank you, everyone, for your ongoing commitment and advocacy. Your voices matter and this is an important moment for our community.

DBLN Strong,
DBLN Core Team