

Dear DBLN Supporters,

STOMP! STOMP! STOMP!

Triple Cheers for our first year of our DeafBlind Leadership NOW movement! It's time to celebrate big time! July 22, 2024 was the day when we rocked the world with DeafBlind Leadership NOW. 262 DeafBlind individuals signed the petition to demand DeafBlind leadership at Helen Keller National Center. The petition can be found in the menu at the bottom of the website. Or click here: <https://deafblindleadershipnow.org/petition.html>

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

There are letters of support in chronological order with the latest letter at the top. You can find those letters in Key Documents in the menu at the bottom of the website. Or click here: <https://deafblindleadershipnow.org/key-documents.html>

DEAFBLIND SPHERE

DeafBlind Sphere showcases the talents and abilities of DeafBlind individuals across our nation. Check it out: <https://deafblindleadershipnow.org/deafblind-sphere.html>

CONGRESSIONAL DEAFBLIND CAUCUS

CDBC will be launched on July 26th to celebrate the anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). There are some new organizations jumping on board:

American Association of the DeafBlind (AADB)

DeafBlind Community of Texas (DBCTX)

Deafblind Community United

Florida DeafBlind Association (FDBA)

Helen Keller National Center (HKNC)

National Association of the Deaf (NAD)

National Coalition on Deafblindness

National Family Association for DeafBlind (NFADB)

National Intervener and Advocate Association (NIAA)

New York Deafblind Advocates

OFFICIAL INVITATION

Have your organization join by emailing Kaylee or Trevor. Here's the official invitation where you can find Kaylee's and Trevor's contact info to join CDBC:

Dear Colleague,

I invite you to join the newly founded Bipartisan Congressional Deafblind Caucus. This Caucus will bring together advocates, individuals who are deafblind, and lawmakers to expand representation and increase support for the deafblind community. Individuals who are deafblind experience combined hearing and vision loss, which can pose communication challenges, limit

information access, and hinder social and emotional well-being. In children, deafblindness may significantly impact development and educational attainment. For deafblind adults, it can be difficult to secure employment opportunities or live independently.

Estimates of the total population of deafblind people in the U.S. range from 40,000 to 100,000 individuals. While a lack of public awareness often prevents deafblind priorities from being heard, deafblind individuals deserve to have the full extent of their experiences accounted for in Congress.

The Congressional Deafblind Caucus will be dedicated to:

1. Highlighting and amplifying the priorities of the deafblind community;
2. Encouraging the creation, and implementation, of legislation that advances these priorities and elevates the needs of this community, such as:
 - o Appropriations priorities
 - o Rep. McGarvey and Senator Markey's bipartisan Alice Cogswell and Anne Sullivan Macy Act (H.R. 5748/S.2945)
 - o Rep. McClain Delaney's bipartisan Deafblind Disabled Americans Table Approximation Act or Deafblind DATA Act (H.R. 8859)
3. Connecting individuals who are deafblind with deafblind advocates, Congresspeople, and their staff via briefings and events.

While advocates across the nation work tirelessly at a local level, more must be done at a federal level to uplift deafblind voices and advocate for their equitable inclusion in society. There are no dues or attendance requirements. To become a member of the Congressional Deafblind Caucus, please email Kaylee.Robinson@mail.house.gov or Trevor.Oconnor@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,
April McClain Delaney and Morgan McGarvey
Members of Congress

DBLN Strong,
DBLN Core Team