

DEAF EDUCATION PROGRAMS

HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SELECT EDUCATION
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
NINETY-NINTH CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION

HEARING HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, MAY 8, 1986

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THURSDAY, MAY 8, 1986

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SELECT EDUCATION,
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10 a.m., in room 2261, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Matthew G. Martinez (acting chairman) presiding.

Members present from the Subcommittee on Select Education: Representatives Williams, Martinez, Hayes, and Bartlett.

Staff present from the Subcommittee on Select Education: Gray Garwood, majority counsel; Colleen Thompson, majority legislative assistant/clerk, and David Esquith, minority legislative associate.

Mr. MARTINEZ. It's been more than 20 years since the Babidge Commission reported its findings and made its recommendations regarding the education of deaf individuals. Since that time, many changes have occurred in deaf education.

For example, in 1965 there were only five postsecondary programs in the country with formal programs for the deaf. Today, there are more than 100 such programs across the country. Although dramatic strides have been made in the area of deaf education, some problems still exist.

Today we will be hearing from concerned legislators, administrators, educators, and consumers regarding deaf education programs. It is my hope that our witnesses will address not only the issue raised regarding the educational opportunities that are now available to the deaf students but will also provide suggestions for the kinds of educational opportunities that will be needed in the future.

As many of you know, legislation has been passed by the Senate regarding deaf education. The proposal would provide for the continuation of the Gallaudet College, and would combine the authorizing legislation for Gallaudet, the Kendall Elementary School, the Model Secondary School, and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, and establish a 5-year reauthorization cycle for these institutions.

It requires that the elementary and secondary school programs operate under the requirements of Public Law 94-142, the Education of All Handicapped.

The annual independent audits of both Gallaudet University and the National Institute for the Deaf are required. A program officer is designated at the Department of Education to provide ongoing review and evaluation.

Finally, the bill establishes an ad hoc National Commission on the Education of the Deaf with the charge of studying the current status of the deaf education throughout the country and reporting specific recommendations to the Congress for improvements.

I would especially appreciate hearing your thoughts on this legislation, and I commend Senator Weicker on the good work that has been done on this bill, and would like to hear your views on the proposal and any further suggestions you may have.

I would like to apologize for Mr. Williams' absence this morning. He is marking up the budget, and he will join us just as soon as he can.

At this time, I would like to turn to Congressman Bartlett for any opening statement he might have.

Mr. BARTLETT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would have a couple of preliminary remarks. I'm looking forward to this hearing and to continued hearings, both on a formal and informal basis, as an opportunity to learn and for the Congress to learn more about the educational needs of deaf Americans over the coming decade.

I do recognize deafness as a unique disability, and I'm certain that Congress will craft legislation with that uniqueness in mind. Frankly, I have to say I'm impressed with the administration's proposal for an endowment. It seems to me to be a good idea and a step in the right direction. But I do want, through the course of this hearing and other hearings, to be certain that it doesn't present any unforeseen problems to NTID and to Gallaudet, and that it is constructed in a correct and helpful manner.

It is a good idea to provide NTID and Gallaudet with more congressional oversight and, therefore, with more congressional support. These institutions will be going through a period of declining enrollment perhaps, because of the rubella bulge decline, and various proposals such as enrollment of foreign students should require some careful scrutiny by Congress.

I'm interested, as I know the witnesses are, in not only those students who are served by Gallaudet and by NTID as well as the postsecondary institutions, but also deaf adults who have continuing education needs throughout this country. I do look forward to hearing from Congressman Bonior and Congressman Gunderson, and recognize them for their interest in Gallaudet.

I look forward to, both at this hearing and over the coming months, to learning a good deal and to inviting formal and informal information that will be presented to Congress through this subcommittee. I am a supporter of Gallaudet and NTID and believe that this process will result in strengthened institutions.

Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you, Mr. Bartlett.

With that, I would like to introduce the Honorable Steve Gunderson and the Honorable David Bonior, who are both members of the board of trustees of Gallaudet College.

TESTIMONY OF HON. DAVID BONIOR, REPRESENTATIVE FROM
THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

Mr. BONIOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's our hope that it will be a university very shortly. It's very nice of you to ask Steve and I to lead off these hearings this morning.

Mr. Chairman, 170 years ago two men set sail for America from France. One was the deaf Frenchman, Laurent Clerc. The other was a hearing impaired minister, the Reverend Thomas H. Gallaudet.

During the enlightenment, education for the deaf flourished in France. Reverend Gallaudet went to France to learn sign language and the techniques of deaf education.

The two were now coming to America, hoping to found an American school for the deaf. As Laurent Clerc described it: "We spent the voyage to America in useful employment. I taught Mr. Gallaudet the methods of signs, and he taught me English."

From that partnership, indeed from that voyage, sprang education for the deaf in America. Laurent Clerc and Thomas Gallaudet founded the first school for the deaf in America just 1 year later, in 1817.

In 1864, Thomas Gallaudet's son, Edward Miner Gallaudet, founded the first college for the deaf in the entire world. Today, Gallaudet College is still the world's only accredited 4 year liberal arts college for the hearing impaired.

Laurent Clerc and the Gallaudet family ushered in a golden age for the hearing impaired in the United States. At the end of the Civil War there were 26 schools for the deaf in the United States. Today, in 1986, we are in the midst of a second renaissance which began in the 1960's. It has been a period of new pride and accomplishment for the hearing impaired.

Through the National Theatre of the Deaf, founded in 1965, the hearing impaired have broadened our understanding with striking plays like "Children of a Lesser God," which debuted in 1979 and stunned Broadway in 1981.

Beginning in the late 1970's, the hearing impaired have won access to television through closed captioning, and they have added to the depth of television through last year's moving Hallmark Hall of Fame special, "Love is Never Silent," among other productions.

In 1981, for the first time in history, a deaf writer, Jack Gannon, wrote a history of deaf America, entitled "Deaf Heritage." I have a copy of that book for the chairman and the ranking member, and will be delighted to present this to you at the close of our testimony.

Each generation of hearing impaired Americans must renew the struggle for dignity and for independence. They wage that struggle from their school on the hill, Gallaudet College, which shines like a beacon across not merely this land but the entire world. For Gallaudet College is more than just a school where students study hard and seek to measure the limits of their independence. Gallaudet College is a place where the deaf community comes together to shape its future.

Deafness is not a disability like other disabilities. It is a disability that strikes directly at the ability to communicate, and so to learn. The deaf must first create a language out of silence, and only then can they begin the formal task of learning.

Many fail. A recent study found that deaf high school students, in general, performed at the fourth grade level in reading, and at the sixth grade level in arithmetic, their best subject; 30 percent of adult deaf Americans are illiterate, according to a 1974 study.

Of Gallaudet's approximately 2,000 students, around 1,700, or some 85 percent, are prelingually deaf. That is, they were either born deaf or became deaf before they acquired a language. Despite their disability, those students will not only graduate from college, they will go on to succeed in the competitive world of the hearing. Listen to just a few statistics.

Gallaudet's graduation rate, nearly 80 percent, was the highest of all the deaf programs surveyed in the recent GAO report.

Of all the deaf college graduates in this country—mind you, out of all of them—two-thirds received their degrees from Gallaudet College.

The median income of Gallaudet graduates is about equal to the national average and, over time, the unemployment rate of Gallaudet graduates is actually lower than the national average for hearing America.

A few blocks from this hearing room, there are thousands of students and teachers working miracles. The miracles have become so routine that the accomplishment may seem normal, but it is not.

Gallaudet students succeed, because they are extraordinary people, working hard. But they also succeed because the school works intensively with each student, helping each student develop a private roadmap to increased dignity and independence.

Gallaudet graduates become leaders in their hearing world as well. Gallaudet graduates helped to form the National Association of the Deaf, founded in 1980, as well as the National Theatre of the Deaf.

If you saw Phyllis Frelich's moving performance in "Children of a Lesser God," you have watched a Gallaudet graduate work. If you were moved by the Hallmark Hall of Fame production of "Love is Never Silent," you have seen Gallaudet graduates at work. Not just in the starring roles played by Phyllis Frelich and Edmund Waterstreet, who is a Gallaudet graduate as well, but behind the scenes in the work of the coexecutive producer, Julianna Field, a Gallaudet graduate.

Through its research institute, its five regional centers and its outreach efforts at the elementary and secondary levels, Gallaudet touches the lives of hearing impaired Americans at every age.

Gallaudet's unique performance has not come at a high price. The school's per-student cost for education services are in the middle range of the costs at other special institutions serving the deaf, according to the recent GAO report. The school's management, under its new president, Dr. Jerry Lee, is actively seeking new ways to cut costs while keeping programs and services at the level of excellence that has always been the hallmark of Gallaudet.

Mr. Chairman, approximately 9 percent of Americans are hearing impaired, some 19 million or more. There are tens of thousands

of hearing impaired citizens in my district and yours; indeed, in every district of every member of this committee.

Deaf education was born 170 years ago in a rare partnership between a deaf teacher and a hearing minister. If deaf education is to continue to grow in America, then we must constantly renew that partnership.

When Thomas Gallaudet founded America's first school for the deaf, the school received a \$5,000 grant from the State of Connecticut. It was an unprecedented action, the first appropriation of public money ever made in America for a charitable institution.

As the committee considers the Education of the Deaf Act which will reauthorize Gallaudet College and grant it university status, I urge you to continue the partnership begun nearly two centuries ago.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Hon. David E. Bonior follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID E. BONIOR, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS
FROM THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

One hundred and seventy years ago, two men set sail for America from France. One was a deaf Frenchman, Laurent Clerc, the other was a hearing impaired minister, the Reverend Thomas H. Gallaudet.

During the enlightenment, education for the deaf flourished in France. Reverend Gallaudet went to France to learn sign language and the techniques of deaf education.

The two were now coming to America, hoping to found an American school for the deaf. As Laurent Clerc described it:

We spent the voyage to America in useful employment. I taught Mr. Gallaudet the methods of signs, and he taught me English.

From the partnership, indeed, from that voyage, sprang education for the deaf in America. Laurent Clerc and Thomas Gallaudet founded the first school for the deaf in America just one year later, in 1817.

In 1864, Thomas Gallaudet's son, Edward Miner Gallaudet founded the first college for the deaf in the entire world. Today, Gallaudet College is still the world's only accredited four year liberal arts college for the hearing impaired.

Laurent Clerc and the Gallaudet family ushered in a golden age for the hearing impaired in the United States. At the end of the Civil War, there were 26 schools for the deaf in the United States.

Today, in 1986, we are in the midst of a second renaissance, which began in the 1960's. It has been a period of new pride and accomplishment for the hearing impaired.

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And they have added to the depth of television through last year's moving Hallmark Hall of Fame special, *Love is Never Silent*, among other productions.

In 1981, for the first time in history, a deaf writer, Jack Gannon wrote a history of deaf America, entitled *Deaf Heritage*.

Each generation of hearing impaired Americans must renew the struggle for dignity and independence. They wage that struggle from their school on the hill, Gallaudet College, which shines like a beacon across not merely this land, but the entire world.

For Gallaudet College is more than just a school where students study hard, and seek to measure the limits of their independence. Gallaudet College is a place where the deaf community comes together to shape its future.

And not just as students and parents, visitors and friends, but as teachers and administrators. Today, nearly 25% of Gallaudet's staff is deaf, including deans, department chairmen, program directors, a vice president, and four members of the Board of Trustees.

Deafness is not a disability like other disabilities. It is a disability that strikes directly at the ability to communicate, and so to learn. The deaf must first create a language out of silence, and only then can they begin the formal tasks of learning.

Many fail. A recent study found that deaf high school students in general performed at the fourth grade level in reading and writing, and at a sixth grade level in arithmetic (their best subject). 30% of adult deaf Americans are illiterate, according to a 1974 survey.

Of Gallaudet's approximately 2100 students, around 1725, or some 85% are prelingually deaf. That is, they were either born deaf or became deaf before they acquired a language.

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Gallaudet students succeed because they are extraordinary people, working hard. But they also succeed because the school works intensively with each student, helping each student develop a private road map to increased dignity and independence.

Gallaudet graduates become leaders in their hearing impaired communities, and, yes, leaders in the hearing world as well. Gallaudet graduates helped to form the National Association of the Deaf, founded in 1880, as well as the National Theatre of the Deaf.

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As the Committee considers the Education of the Deaf Act which will reauthorize Gallaudet College and grant it university status, I urge you to continue the partnership begun nearly two centuries ago.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you. Mr. Gunderson.

TESTIMONY OF HON. STEVE GUNDERSON, REPRESENTATIVE
FROM THE STATE OF WISCONSIN

Mr. GUNDERSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members. It is a distinct privilege to be here today, because by virtue of being here before this subcommittee I am able to fulfill one of the best honors that I have had while serving in the Congress; and that is to be chosen and appointed by Speaker O'Neill with Dave Bonior as one of the two House Members on the Gallaudet College Board of Trustees.

It is also a very personal experience for me, because we have in our family a deaf child who we sincerely hope in a few years will become not only a student but a graduate of Gallaudet University, at that particular point in time.

As a member of the full House Education and Labor Committee and also as a trustee of Gallaudet College for the past year, I really appreciate this opportunity to simply add my support to the unique mission and importance of Gallaudet College which is, of course, in my opinion, the important title I of the Education of the Deaf Act, and I really want to focus my remarks on title I.

Gallaudet College, since opening its doors in 1864, has grown to serve as an international symbol of the unique aptitude, potential, and talent of hearing impaired individuals. Additionally, Gallaudet College has continued to deliver outstanding programs, leadership, opportunities and vision for the hearing impaired of all ages.

Gallaudet College has evolved throughout its history as a multifaceted education establishment, offering learning opportunities for preschool youngsters at Kendall Demonstration Elementary School, to high school students at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf, to the extensive work occurring at the Gallaudet Research Institute. Certainly, this is an innovative learning environment for both faculty and for the students.

In that regard, I recall when Dr. Jerry Lee and I visited shortly after he came as president. He told me at that time he was just trying to learn sign language. So I would hope that this subcommittee would challenge him to give his testimony in sign language to see how he has progressed over the last year.

Education, outreach, and research, cornerstones of the Gallaudet College mission, are clearly evident through the ageless activities executed in the main campus here in Washington, DC, and its extension centers throughout the United States. In that regard, I would encourage every member of this subcommittee, through this process, enjoy a spring day, walking through the Gallaudet College campus with Dr. Lee, as I have been privileged to do about a year ago. It is truly a wonderful, wonderful morning.

As a liberal arts institution serving 2,632 precollege and college students in the previous academic year, Gallaudet College has been highly ranked by college presidents and in a U.S. News and World Report survey. In 1983, Gallaudet College was ranked fifth best regional liberal arts college in the Eastern United States.

With the dedication of Gallaudet College's administrators, faculty, staff, and students, the 1985 survey ranked Gallaudet College third of Eastern smaller comprehensive institutions, a commendable accomplishment illustrating the depth and the quality of this

particular college, a college which was set out with a mission and which, obviously, has gone beyond the mission to also achieve excellence in its role.

Serving to open doors that were previously closed to hearing impaired individuals, Gallaudet College's success is equally visible through the high percentage of graduate placement and careers of its alumni, as Dave referred to in his testimony.

The future of Gallaudet College is extremely bright with endless opportunities for hearing impaired individuals. It is a unique educational environment making an incredible impact on all people, especially the communities, families, and individuals it serves. All it needs at this point in time is for us to continue its reauthorization, which we have the opportunity and, in my opinion, the privilege to do in the Education of the Deaf Act.

With that, Mr. Chairman and members, I indeed thank you for this opportunity to offer a small but very heartfelt endorsement of Gallaudet College.

Mr. MARTINEZ. We understand the sincerity with which you speak. It is very heartwarming.

Mr. Bartlett.

Mr. BARTLETT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A comment and a question. I very much appreciate Congressman Bonior's comments, particularly on literacy. It does seem to me to be the most significant feature that we in the Congress and as a matter of public policy we ought to approach; that is, improving literacy among hearing impaired. It seems to me that that issue may also be addressed come the reauthorization of the Education of the Handicapped Act in terms of placing an emphasis—a reemphasis on literacy, which we all support.

My question of each of you would be, have you had an opportunity to review the proposal for the creation of a Federal matching endowment, and what is your visceral reaction to that proposal? As I understand, it is based in some part upon a similar matching endowment at Howard University. It would provide a Federal match, \$1 million authorized 1 year for each of the next 5 years to each of NTID and Gallaudet, and the match would be raised by the respective institutions from the private sector. Then 50 percent of the interest could be used for operations over the first 20 years.

Mr. BONIOR. This specifically for improving literacy?

Mr. BARTLETT. No. It would be, in fact, for improving the operations of Gallaudet, to establish an endowment for the institutions.

Mr. BONIOR. Well, I haven't frankly looked at the specifics of what you're referring to, but I'd be delighted to do so. I would prefer not to comment until I do.

Mr. BARTLETT. It will be a subject, I think, that will be discussed.

Mr. GUNDERSON. Let me just make a general comment, because I do not have the specifics and do not want to speak or be interpreted as speaking for Gallaudet College as to a position. I think that all of us who have been involved in the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act clearly recognize one of our major roles, is to find a way in which to create some endowments in many of our institutions of higher education.

Certainly, from that perspective we ought to recognize the consistency of doing the same with Gallaudet College.

Mr. BONIOR. How would the match work? Is it a 50/50 match?

Mr. BARTLETT. Fifty/fifty match, Federal Government putting up \$1 million a year to be matched by fundraising efforts by Gallaudet College and NTID.

Mr. BONIOR. And the expenditures would be—would rest with the institution, or would there be any hooks to the Federal match?

Mr. BARTLETT. Well, the funds, as I understand the proposal—and it's still being developed. The funds would go into the endowment, and then the funds would be spent out of that endowment. But for the first 20 years only 50 percent of the interest could be spent out of the endowment. The rest of the interest would be required to accrue in order to build up a good sized endowment after 20 years.

Mr. BONIOR. And the interest is to be spent on operational costs and new programs?

Mr. BARTLETT. Pretty well open ended. It would be by the institution. One of the controversies—and I say controversy loosely. I'm not convinced that it, in fact, is a real controversy—is obviously whether the endowment's income would be spent to replace Federal funds, since most of the funds for the institution come from the Federal Government, or whether it would be to provide additional initiative to the institution.

It would be my thought it would be unlikely that it would replace current funds, but there is some at least conversation about it.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. BARTLETT. Be happy to yield.

Mr. MARTINEZ. I understand that Mr. Carnes is going to address that same issue. If you have the time and you want to know a little bit more about it, you might stay back and listen to his testimony.

Mr. BARTLETT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you. Thank you, Congressman Bonior and Congressman Gunderson.

At this time I'd like to call forward Mr. Bruce Carnes, and accompanying Mr. Carnes is Mr. Tom Skelly. Would you come forward.

As I understand it, Mr. Carnes, you will be giving the testimony, and Mr. Skelly is here to accompany you and to answer any questions?

Mr. CARNES. To answer any questions that I can't answer.

Mr. MARTINEZ. OK. Would you proceed.

**TESTIMONY OF BRUCE CARNES, DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY
FOR PLANNING, BUDGET AND EVALUATION, DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION**

Mr. CARNES. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'm pleased to be here to address you and the members of this subcommittee on behalf of Secretary Bennett and the administration concerning S. 1874 and our proposed legislation for endowment for special institutions.

I have a written statement which I would request be included in the record, if you please.