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Governor Phil Murphy
February 29, 2020
225 W. State St.
Trenton, NJ 08625

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Dear Governor Murphy,

HEAR OUR SILENT VOICES: Loneliness kills! The social isolation caused by communication barriers creates unnecessary mental and physical deterioration among thousands of NJ residents. Currently, to live in supportive housing designed to accommodate their linguistic and social needs, Deaf people must move to Arizona or Florida, far from their family, friends, and longtime communities here in New Jersey.

We at *New Jersey Deaf Housing, Inc.* believe the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind, and Late Deafened Communities of New Jersey have suffered in silence far too long.

Modeling our new facility on those already thriving in other states, we have worked diligently for over 20 years to open an adult residence with the assistive technology and the only of its kind in the Northeast Region of the country that creates a safe, comfortable home for this population. After a series of false starts, financial obstacles, and governmental resistance, we are finally in negotiation with the New Jersey Department of Education to lease an unused building at the School for the Deaf in Ewing, NJ. With the guidance of specialized architects, we are fully prepared to begin "building our dream" of affordable supportive Deaf housing (the ONLY one of its kind in the greater Tri-State area).

Governor Murphy, WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT! Although the administrators of Katzenbach School unanimously have approved of our proposal, the Superintendent's office has failed to respond to their suggestions to move ahead with our lease. We are at a crucial impasse. Although we were offered the abandoned Boys Dormitory in the Spring of 2019, it seems that the bureaucratic "red tape" of the State government has halted our momentum. With your record of listening to the unmet needs of your constituents and getting things accomplished on their behalf, we urge you to advocate for us with the Department of Education to approve our proposal. Hundreds of Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind, and Late Deafened people are counting on you.

Sincerely,

Executive Board, New Jersey Deaf Housing, Inc.