

Ministerial Statement – Minister Recognizes International Week of the Deaf

Children, Seniors and Social Development

September 17, 2020

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The following statement was given today in the House of Assembly by the Honourable Brian Warr, Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development:

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge September 21 to 27 as International Week of the Deaf.

This occasion is celebrated by Deaf communities around the world – individuals who are Deaf and hard-of-hearing, and who share a common visual language. In Canada, that language is American Sign Language.

Newfoundland and Labrador Deaf culture and American Sign Language enrich our province's colourful personality.

As Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities, I am pleased to see this year's theme is "Reaffirming Deaf People's Human Rights".

Our government recognizes that accessible communication is paramount in ensuring a fully inclusive province where all citizens have equitable access to information and opportunity.

Access to sign language and services in sign language, are critical to the full realization of deaf people, and our province has shown true leadership in this area.

In keeping with our commitment to the UN convention on the rights of Persons with Disabilities, which strengthens linguistic and cultural viewpoints of Deaf people, we were one of the first jurisdictions in the country to include American Sign Language interpretation at COVID-19 media briefings.

During International Week of the Deaf, I invite all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to recognize the language and culture of the Deaf community, as well as the accomplishments and contributions that the Deaf community make throughout the province.

I invite you to join me in signing Happy International Week of the Deaf.

Thank you.

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