

# DISABILITY RIGHTS CENTER - NH

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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Disability Rights Center - New Hampshire

### **State Commits to Increase Accessibility for People with Disabilities**

COVID-19 disproportionately impacts people with disabilities and many are closely following the State's response to the public health crisis. Since the state began holding regular COVID-19 related press conferences back in March, Governor Sununu and other state leaders have consistently appeared alongside sign language interpreters. We commend this commitment to accessibility.

However, people throughout New Hampshire who are deaf with low vision are unable to hear the audio or see the interpreter. They have struggled to access the State's critical updates in a timely manner. After we received a call about this issue, DRC-NH attorneys reached out to the Governor's office and worked with his staff to find a way to accommodate these Granite Staters.

Today, we are excited to announce that the Governor's office has committed to releasing accessible transcripts of future press conferences. Transcripts will be posted on-line as soon as possible following each conference but by the end of the following day at the latest. Transcripts are available at <https://www.governor.nh.gov/news-and-media?category=Transcripts>.

"As we navigate this public health crisis, it's more important than ever to ensure that information is readily accessible to all Granite Staters," said Governor Chris Sununu. "The release of transcripts follows on our efforts from the onset of this pandemic to utilize a Certified Deaf Interpreter during press conferences. Increasing accessibility is a team effort, and we thank everyone who has helped play a role."

Joan Case, the woman who contacted DRC-NH for help said, "Thank you so much for helping to make the briefing accessible to people like me who are deafblind and to others who might have been missing the briefing. Now we can follow what's going on in NH."

"We are pleased that Governor Sununu has taken steps to make his press conferences accessible since the start of this crisis and that he took action quickly when this barrier was brought to his attention. The availability of press conference transcripts will benefit not only the individual who called us for help, but also people with all types of disabilities across the state," said Stephanie Patrick, Executive Director.

DRC-NH is open during this crisis and welcomes calls from people with all types of disabilities on legal issues related to disability and COVID-19.

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*Protection and Advocacy System for New Hampshire*

DRC-NH is New Hampshire's designated Protection and Advocacy system and is dedicated to eliminating barriers existing in New Hampshire to the full and equal enjoyment of civil and other legal rights by people with disabilities. More information about DRC-NH can be found at <http://www.drcnh.org>.