**Appendix**

**Senate of Canada Letter Template**

[Date]

The Honourable (Full Name), Senator

The Senate

Ottawa, Ontario

K1A 0A4

Dear Senator (name),

I am writing to discuss Bill C-81 – the ***Accessible Canada Act***, “*An Act to ensure a barrier-free Canada”*

This legislation is so very important for Deaf persons and people with disabilities, as it would lead to an improvement in their quality of life. The Honourable Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Public Services, Procurement and Accessibility, has stated that 5,000 new jobs will be created for persons with disabilities and Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing persons in Canada. This is just one part of the goal for accessibility legislation as seen by our Deaf community.

At the current stage, Bill C-81 lacks the ***recognition of ASL and LSQ as official languages of Deaf people in Canada***. I would like to ask you to include in an amendment to Bill C-81 because ASL and LSQ are critical for accessibility, language rights and civic participation of the Deaf communities in Canada. It will make a dramatic improvement in the lives of Deaf Canadians to have their ASL and LSQ recognized as being equal to English and French. This will give these Canadians equal access to the federal government through information, communications, and services that are made accessible to the Deaf community through the use of ASL and LSQ.

Currently, there are over 45 countries that have recognized their national sign languages by their governments. Some of these countries are the Philippines, Ireland, Greece, Scotland, Italy, Mexico, and New Zealand. Canada is not on this list. The legislation will allow Canada to join dozens of other countries which already have national accessibility legislation, along with the recognition of their national sign languages, following the requirements of the ***United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities***.

The Canadian Association of the Deaf-Association des Sourds du Canada has prepared a document outlining key messages related to what is needed to be included in the Bill C-81 to make it a truly comprehensive legislation. I would like an opportunity to meet with you to discuss this further. Could you kindly let me know when you would be available for such a discussion?

Your support would mean a great deal to me and all Deaf people in Canada. This will begin the removal of barriers and ensuring equal access, which is an important step toward becoming an***Accessible Canada*** as we integrate into both English and French societies.

You can reach me at [your email] for discussing with you. Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Signature*

[Your name]

[Your address]

[Your City], [Your Province] [Your Postal Code]

cc: Frank Folino, President, CAD-ASC (ffolino@cad.ca)

James Roots, Executive Director, CAD-ASC (jroots@cad.ca)

Senator Peter C. Harder, Government Representative in the Senate (peter.harder@sen.parl.gc.ca)

Senator Larry W. Smith, Leader of Opposition in the Senate (larry.smith@sen.parl.gc.ca)