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Lisa McClean Stellick
Station Manager, Rogers TV Durham Region
301 Marwood Drive
Oshawa, ON L1H 1J4

March 5, 2013

Dear Ms. McClean Stellick,

Re: Captioning for City and Town Council Meetings

The Durham Deaf Accessibility Committee was established five years ago with our main focus being advocacy for improved accessibility for the Deaf and hard of hearing community in the Durham Region. We had been in communication with you approximately two years ago regarding the provision of captioning for city and town council meetings in the Durham Region as it is our understanding that there are no captioning provided for local city and town council meetings in the Durham Region.

We have also communicated with various municipalities in the Durham Region who has their council meetings televised about this issue too as well. We had received some responses from them.

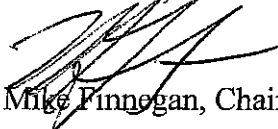
The issue of responsibility for the provision of captioning seems to be ambiguous but we believe that it is both the responsibility of city and town councils as well as Rogers to provide full accessibility for people with hearing loss as residents of the municipalities they live in and as consumers of Rogers TV. Recent statistics shows that 1 out of 4 Canadians have some degree of hearing loss and our population is aging so the number of people who may rely on captioning is likely increasing.

There are other cities in Ontario who have already taken steps to provide full accessibility for the residents of their municipalities by providing captioning for their televised council meetings such as Windsor, Hamilton, Toronto, Burlington and Halton Hills. We hope that the Region of Durham and the municipalities in this region will follow suit and take action to ensure that accessibility is being provided for Deaf and Hard of Hearing residents.

We are aware that the Canadian Television and Radio Corporation issued a decision that all channels will be provided with captioning by September 1, 2014 as a condition of re-licensing. We hope that you would honour this expectation and by late 2014, the Deaf and hard of hearing community in this area will be able to view televised city and town council meetings with captions. They should already have this privilege as we are also taxpayers just like any other resident of Durham Region.

We will be monitoring for any developments in September 2014 and we sincerely hope that there will be no need to further advocate on this issue by then.

With thanks,



Mike Finnegan, Chair

cc: Jean-Pierre Blais, Chair, Canadian Radio and Television Corporation
cc: Durham Deaf Accessibility Committee – Don Kinsley, Veronica Bickle, Gordon Ryall, Beverley Dooley, Kim Reid, Mirek Swiecicki, Behishta Mushtaq, Bryan Meany and Robert Lang.
cc: Maggie Doherty-Gilbert, Regional Director, The Canadian Hearing Society, Peterborough, York, Durham and City of Kawartha Lakes Regions
cc: Christine Elliott, MPP – Oshawa-Whitby
cc: Jerry Ouellette, MPP – Oshawa
cc: Laurie Scott, MPP – Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock
cc: John O'Toole, MPP – Durham
cc: Joe Dickson, MPP – Ajax-Pickering
cc: Tracy MacCharles, MPP – Pickering-Scarborough East
cc: Roger Anderson, Regional Chair, The Regional Municipality of Durham
cc: Tracy Tyner-Cavanaugh, Accessibility Coordinator, The Regional Municipality of Durham
cc: Pat Perkins, Mayor of Whitby
cc: John Henry, Mayor of Oshawa
cc: Steve Parish, Mayor of Ajax
cc: David Ryan, Mayor of Pickering
cc: Adrian Foster, Mayor of the Municipality of Clarington
cc: Chuck Mercier – Mayor of Scugog
cc: Gerri-Lynn O'Connor, Mayor of Uxbridge
cc: Terry Clayton, Mayor of Brock
cc: Whitby Accessibility Advisory Committee
cc: Ajax Accessibility Advisory Committee
cc: Town of Brock Accessibility Advisory Committee
cc: Clarington Accessibility Advisory Committee
cc: Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee
cc: Scugog Accessibility Advisory Committee
cc: Oshawa Accessibility Advisory Committee
cc: Uxbridge Accessibility Advisory Committee
cc: Durham Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee