

# PROCLAMATION

## DEAF AWARENESS MONTH

**Whereas,** The Deaf experience is a natural part of life and is valued as a part of our rich diversity; and

**Whereas,** The Deaf Community is a social construct. The 'problem' is not the medical condition that resides within the individual, but the 'problem' is that society does not create welcoming, supporting environments/policies/systems/access for all; and

**Whereas,** The most effective way to increase awareness is through everyone's openness to learn and acknowledge that there are systemic barriers that reduce the likelihood of the Deaf enjoying equitable experiences and living independent, productive lives within their communities through language equality and equal access; and

**Whereas,** Equitable experiences and full inclusion is a matter of social justice. Consequently, creating equitable inclusive environments is a shared responsibility of everyone; and

**Whereas,** Policies must be developed, attitudes shaped, and equitable experiences and access be offered to all individuals; including the Deaf; and

**Whereas,** Awareness must be raised that inadequate and/or unavailable services and processes are not only more costly, financially, to our society; but are also more costly to the deaf who desire to live in a world of equity and access. It is further costly to our communities because society misses out on the rich talents and experiences the deaf Community has to offer; and

**Whereas,** Citizens should do all in their power to:

- Recognize the value and intersectionality of the Deaf experience in our lives and the valued role it has in our rich diversity.
- Recognize the barriers presented to the Deaf.
- Create ways to include everyone; especially the Deaf and provide equal access through language equality.
- Understand the losses (financial, spiritual, human rights, contributions to community, and otherwise) when our communities segregate and create barriers for the Deaf Community.
- Demand policymakers no longer invest in segregation and create inclusive, equitable policies and systems for all.

**Now, therefore,** we, the City Council of the City of Imperial, do hereby proclaim September 2020 as

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and galvanize efforts that will lead our communities and policy makers to create real systems change so the Deaf Community will enjoy equitable, inclusive lives through language equality and equal access.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF,** I have hereunto set my hand and caused our seal this 16<sup>th</sup> day of September, in the year of our Lord, two thousand and twenty.

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Darrell Pechtl, Mayor