



July 19, 2022

Diana Pryntz, Executive Director  
Deaf Refugee Advocacy Inc  
POB 10335  
Rochester, NY 14610

Dear Ms. Pryntz:

Empire Justice Center is pleased to provide this letter to Deaf Refugee Advocacy (DRA) in support of your grant application in response to the Monroe County American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) RFA.

DRA has been providing on-going community support with extremely vulnerable citizens: deaf refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seekers (RIAs) during the past few years. Because of our Language Justice work, particularly our leadership of the Monroe County Language Access Coalition, Empire Justice is acutely aware of the significant inequities, systemic barriers, and disparities that exist for RIAs as well as other at-risk deaf people including DeafBlind, Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HH) homeless (some of which are RIAs), Deaf/HH Disabled, Deaf Seniors, Deaf/HH Mental Health and Deaf/HH who have aged out of the education system without adequate supports. Many of these Deaf/HH individuals are unable to either attend college, receive training and/or obtain marketable skills, continually perpetuating underemployment or unemployment due to systemic communication barriers that exist in Monroe County.

We agree that there is a critical need for a major transformative approach that transcends language access inequities. DRA's ARPA grant proposal focuses on a long-term framework to address the needs of this long-impacted community utilizing an American Sign Language (ASL) multicultural model with a three-pronged service delivery program which will benefit the entire Monroe County community.

We are excited to explore additional ways that Empire Justice and DRA can work together to ensure Language Justice for our community.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Vice President, Empire Justice Center  
[khughes@empirejustice.org](mailto:khughes@empirejustice.org)